IRISH 1798 COLLECTION


COLLEGE
IHS

THE FINANCIAL RELATIONS OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

(With apologies to the *Wahrer Jacob.*)

That angel whose charge is Eiré sang thus o'er the dark Isle winging—

* * * * *

For ages three without laws ye shall flee as beasts in the forest:
For an age, and a half age, Faith shall bring not peace but a sword.
Then laws shall rend you, like eagles, sharp-fanged, of your scourges the sorest:
When these three Woes are past look up, for your hope is restored.

AUBREY T. DE VERE.

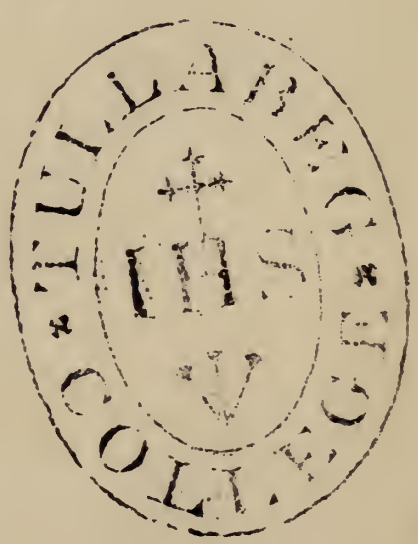
THE CENTENARY OF 1798

AND ITS BEARING ON THE

PRACTICAL POLITICS OF TO-DAY.

BY

W. T. STEAD.



[*ILLUSTRATED.*]

1898.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE articles contained in this volume originally appeared as the "Topic of the Month" in the *Review of Reviews* for July and August. These articles excited such vehement feeling both for and against that I reprint them in a form more convenient for general access than the pages of a monthly periodical.

Mr. Justin McCarthy, M.P., wrote me the following letter from Westgate-on-Sea :—

MY DEAR MR. STEAD,—I have just finished a very careful study of your article on the Irish Rebellion of 1798. I could not write too strongly of the gratitude I feel, as an Irish Nationalist, for the service you have done to my country, and to my countrymen all over the world, by your masterly survey of the causes which led to that rebellion and the instrumentalities by which it was crushed. You have found your authorities where they cannot possibly be disputed—in the writings and utterances of English statesmen and English soldiers. Were I an Englishman I should feel bound to say that you have rendered a splendid service to England by your revelation of the truth. You need not "fear to speak of ninety-eight." You have won fresh honour for yourself and your country by your treatment of the whole subject.—Very truly yours, JUSTIN MCCARTHY.

Mr. John Dillon, M.P., writing from the House of Commons, said :—

I have read carefully the article on "The Centenary of 1798." It is surprising and most gratifying to find an Englishman so entirely free from prejudice as to realize the character of the transactions connected with the Rebellion of 1798, and so courageous as to state his views as you have done in this article. I have no doubt the article will do much good by causing thousands of English people to realize the feelings of Irish Nationalists to an extent impossible to them before they had read your article.

Mr. Michael Davitt, M.P., wrote :—

"I have read the whole of your article on '98, and I must write to give expression to my admiration for the courage you have shown in what you have written and the brilliant vindication you have given of the rebel movement of a century ago. I question whether John Mitchel has ever

shown a more fearless speech in giving testimony to the truth and justice of the Irish cause than is found expressed in your article. You never did a better stroke for Ireland—or for England either—if your countrymen would only take the lesson of your article to heart.

Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, M.P., said :—

Every Nationalist Irishman to whom the knowledge of your article may come will feel your debtor for that article. I believe the most valuable results might be anticipated if every Englishman could be got to read it.

The Manager of the Catholic Press Company wrote me to say that he thought the article on 1798 the "most conclusive, impressive, and telling indictment of British rule in Ireland at that period" that he had ever seen. So much impressed was he that he issued it in full as a special supplement to each of his twenty Catholic papers, and is now making arrangements to circulate a million copies of the reprint through the constituencies.

An Irish-American priest wrote me from Mill Hill a long letter which he began thus :—

Thanks, deep-felt, grateful thanks for your masterly article on Ireland in this July number of the *Review of Reviews*. These thanks are those of an Irishman (indeed, of an Irish-American by domicile and full-fledged citizenship for nearly one half of a long life), and as such I am moved this moment by a sense of gratitude for this act of generous candour and historic justice touching my native land which I could not possibly feel for the greatest personal favour in your power to confer on myself. Feeling thus, I can assure you that I occupy no more space than two feet can stand on in a crowd of many millions. I am only one of many such millions within the United States alone, including all related to Catholic Ireland by blood and affinity. I am morally certain of it, that I voice their sentiments.

The Rev. H. M. Kennedy, the enthusiastic Vicar of Plumpton, published his views on Ireland's position in '98, from which I extract the following passage :—

Stead's article in the July *Review of Reviews* is to the point, and is quite enough reading for both races on past history and Ireland's justification. It should be circulated in several languages throughout the world.

That the Irish leaders do not err in believing the effect of the article must do good to the Irish cause is proved by the fierce resentment it has occasioned among their enemies, and the spasm of contrition and emotion it has excited among many of those whose devotion to the cause of Ireland had grown cold. From my correspondence I extract a passage significant of much from a letter written by a young woman serving as an assistant

in a confectioner's shop in the West of England. Originally reared in a Radical household, my correspondent, on going forth into the world to earn her living, had been thrown among people who had to some extent infected her with their own prejudices. She writes:—

I had come to the conclusion that the Irish were a discontented people, and never satisfied, and that it was a very good thing the Home Rule Bill was never carried. But, needless to say, since reading your article on the Rebellion, I think that no longer. I could not describe to you the effect that article had on me. While reading my blood boiled in my veins, and I felt ashamed of my nation and of my English blood. Whatever I can do, now or in the years to come, to help on the Irish cause, that will I do to the best of my ability, wishing that I had leisure, money, and great ability to devote to the cause.

Another correspondent wrote:—"I surely think such a paper, if read, will awaken a feeling of sympathy, even in dullard souls, towards a nation so cruelly treated and misgoverned."

The fury of those who hate Ireland and the Irish manifested itself in ferocious invectives and savage denunciations directed against the article and the author—invectives and denunciations which, while making great parade of superior historical knowledge, left the fundamental element of the indictment untouched.

Mr. Lecky wrote me in acknowledging the receipt of the article:—

I cannot say that it seems to me a specimen of the kind of history which graduates accurately lights and shadows and estimates in a judicial spirit the conduct, motives, palliations, and provocations of contending parties. I dare say it will be not the less popular on that account.

To this I replied that my object was not to sit on the judgment seat of the Almighty, but merely to display, as conspicuously as possible, the salient facts of the case, the horrible significance of which had been concealed from the British public by just the very qualifications and graduations to which he referred. These essential facts had already been recorded in Mr. Lecky's own history. I had only stripped them clear so that all men might see them in their damnable reality.

Mr. Ed. Carson, Q.C., wrote deprecating the revival of the story:—

"My own view is that it is a chapter in history creditable to neither

country, but of little use after a hundred years in helping present controversies."

This point as to the inexpediency and injustice of recalling the memories of 1798 was pressed home with vigour and conviction in a letter which I received from Admiral Maxse, who wrote to me from Switzerland on August 23rd as follows :—

I observe you are receiving comments upon that terrible paper you wrote in last month's *Review of Reviews* on the Centenary of '98. I was nearly writing to you at the time, but had no leisure. I put off writing until too late—but now receiving the *Review of Reviews* out here, where I have a little leisure, and observing you are impenitent, my wrath revives; and as one who has had friendly relations with you to the extent of considering myself a friend of yours, and as one who admires your public spirit and industry and fire, I venture to remonstrate against your most mischievous article, which can only make further bad blood between the *tribal* Irish and the English. I think you know the sense in which I use the term "tribal"—I mean those who remain in the tribal stage—the fighting *clan* stage—and who have not emerged into a more civilized organization. I don't believe a quarter of your account is true of events a hundred years ago; and if it *were* true, the memory of it should not be revived: good men should endeavour to forget wickedness. Supposing your great-grandfather had ravished my great-grandmother, is that any reason why a blood feud should be perpetuated between us? "Let the Past bury the Past." Then again, is it not altogether preposterous to make a modern generation responsible for the misdeeds of a previous generation? The modern ideal is not only at variance, but is frequently antagonistic to the ancient ideal or standard. You say "we," the "English," are responsible for some frightful crimes committed in the past. Who are "we"? Who are "we" thus arraigned? I came across a passage the other day which thus dealt with this abstraction the "We"—

"Some are fond of smiting a Corporate 'We.' 'We' may be a hundred million people whose bygone Party Governments divide between them the responsibility of wrong-doing. The men directly and immediately responsible are dead and gone from the scene, leaving some of the results to others, who had no part in their proceedings."

It is not only preposterous, but it is immoral to attribute the guilt of ancestors to any present living persons.

I could have understood Mr. Davitt, who is a unique specimen of the tribal Irishman, writing your Centenary article, but it is enough to make one despair of progress to find a civilized Englishman (and one of a religious turn) producing such inflammatory, delusive fustian.

I speak plainly because the occasion needs it, and you are a plain speaker yourself. You are perfectly welcome to publish this letter—pray do so—although I had not intended it to be more than a private remonstrance.—Yours sincerely, FREDK. A. MAXSE.

I gladly print Admiral Maxse's letter because of the admirable text which it supplies for a few remarks directed to the common

objection as to the futility and the injustice of reviving the memory of the crimes of our ancestors.

The publication of "The Centenary of 1798" is no mere historical exercitation on my part. It was, and is, intended to contribute in the directest way and in the most practical fashion to the solution of one of the political controversies of to-day. If, in the case propounded by Admiral Maxse, my great-grandfather had, as the direct result of the outrage in question, enabled me to annoy, coerce, and plunder Admiral Maxse at the present day, even he would surely consider it pertinent and necessary to remind me of the brutal and licentious crime from which my power over him was derived. That crime, he would say, was no doubt a thing of the remote past. But as long as the descendants of the criminal continue to exercise, by virtue of that outrage, powers of coercion and of plunder over the descendants of their victim, no court, whether of law or of equity, would for a moment refuse to permit reference to the original crime by which the unrepentant heirs of the unpunished criminal continued to profit. Of course Admiral Maxse will deny that the power of the predominant partner over the tribal Irish is dishonest or unjust. But in the opinion of these said Irish, it is both; and as the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations affords them at least a *primâ facie* case for the faith that is in them, Admiral Maxse's contrary opinion can in no way estop them from pleading that the title-deeds of the system of which they complain are written in blood.

We are quite willing to let the Dead Past bury the dead, when those whose prerogative and privilege and power are based upon the misdeeds of the past have made atonement for their crimes. Until then the Ghost of the Dead Past continues to haunt the living. Nor can any exorcism lay the accusing spectre till justice has been done. At present we contend that the Past of 1798 is far from dead. A vampire is not dead—it is most horribly alive. And so is the Past of Ireland, which Admiral Maxse would consign to oblivion. If we are to assist at its obsequies, then, there must be for Ireland Justice in the Present and Hope in the Future.

It is strange and sad to note that the men who glory in the Union are still callous to the horror of the means by which it was achieved. That staunch organ of Protestant ascendancy, the *Belfast News Letter*, has not one word of condemnation for the atrocities to which I called the attention of the public. Its indignation is excited solely against me. It would have had me prosecuted by the Irish Attorney-General for writing "an article that offends loyal sentiment, because it maligns the memory of great rulers, great statesmen, and great soldiers, who saved Ireland, subdued treason, and baffled seditious schemes." "Loyal sentiment," apparently, has only praise for the "great" men who saved Ireland by adopting "universal rape" as a means of forcing on an appeal to the sword. The *Belfast News Letter* is as tender to the ruffians of the Pitch-cap and Free Quarters as *United Ireland* used to be about the cattle houghing and midnight murders of the Land League days.

One excellent man, a neighbour of mine at Wimbledon, Mr. Dowsett by name, was so severely exercised in his mind concerning my iniquity in speaking highly of the chastity of the Irish and their incorrigibly easy-going, forgiving disposition that he devoted a whole broadside of *The Land Roll* to an exposition of my manifold shortcomings. It is interesting to see the way in which this worthy polemist proceeds. He begins by upbraiding me for reviving the memory of the ancient crimes of 1798, and then by way of off-setting my recital, he proceeds to revive with gusto the worst tales of atrocities perpetrated by the native Irishry in 1641, and to reprint the familiar text of outrages committed in Ireland under the Land League. He ignores the essential fact of the fundamental difference between the oppressors and oppressed, viz., that whereas both sides displayed no little ferocity in their warfare, the troops of the Government ravished like Turks or Kurds all the Irishwomen they could lay hands on, while not even the most unscrupulous assailant of the rebels has accused them of violating any woman in the whole course of the insurrection. He lays great stress upon the fact that the Irish had for seven years previously been preparing for an insurrection, as if that in the slightest degree invalidated anything that I have

said. The pity of it was not that they had been preparing for seven years, but that they had made such miserably inadequate preparations and were so utterly unprepared for effective rebellion. The highest British military authorities vouched for the fact that the Irish insurrectionary movement could have been easily put down without any serious bloodshed. That, however, was not what the Government wanted. They wanted to force the Irish, all unprepared as they were, into armed rebellion before the French could come to their assistance, and they succeeded. They taught the Irish "a much-needed lesson" and reaped the Union as a fruit of their iniquity.

It has been remarked by one critic that the Government were justified in prematurely exploding the rebellion by the principle of self-preservation. Governments which know that their subjects are biding their time for a favourable rising may surely, it is argued, be allowed to force the hand of the disloyal citizens in order to compel them to take the field not when they would have chosen, but at the moment most suitable for their speedy suppression. I do not object to that. But there are certain limits to what is permissible to a Government to do in order to force its enemies prematurely into the field, and my contention is simply that the "universal rape" of the wives and daughters of those suspected of disaffection lies absolutely outside the pale. The phrase about "universal rape" has been objected to. It is not my phrase. It is the phrase used by Lord Cornwallis to describe the actual result of the system of free quarters which had been deliberately ordered by Lord Castlereagh and his friends in order to prematurely explode a rebellion which all other provocations had failed to bring about. If Lord Castlereagh and the British Government of 1798 were justified in employing wholesale outrage as an instrument of statesmanship, then we owe our apologies to the Assassin of Stamboul and his predecessor in title who let loose the Circassians and the Bashi-Bazouks upon the maidens of Bulgaria. The civilized world has, however, made up its mind on that question. The rules of the game, even in Eastern lands, taboo rape equally with cannibalism as resources of the administration. But in Ireland in 1798 the

rules of the game were ignored by the winners who pocketed the stakes.

The ferocity of some of the reverend apologists for criminals like Castlereagh and his myrmidons would seem to show that the fanatical Protestant in Ireland is as unregenerate a child of the devil as he was in the days when he revelled in the luxury of clapping pitch-caps on the Catholic's head and showed his piety by plundering his neighbour's house and ravishing his neighbour's wife. There is a curious little publication derisively called *The Catholic*, published in Dublin, which may be taken as an extreme type of that most ultra-true-blue Protestantism which has for centuries accustomed the Irish masses to regard a Protestant as a kind of a cross between a man-eating tiger and a crocodile. *The Catholic*, which is edited by the Rev. Thomas Connellan, is moved by my article to call me "liar" thrice over—which does not signify—but the significant passage is that in which it warns me that the good Protestants of Ulster may lynch me if I venture back into Ulster.

The people of Ulster are patient and law-abiding, but I beg to give "I, William Thomas Stead" a friendly hint that there are bog-holes in that province, and it might be safer for him to go to Turkey or Salt Lake district next time.

Lest I should mistake his meaning, Mr. Connellan wrote to me personally saying, "If the triangle and the pitch-cap should ever be excusable, it should be used on such as you."

I suppose Mr. Connellan knows the kind of "people of Ulster" who read *The Catholic*, but their worst enemy would hardly have ventured to suggest that they would put a man in a bog-hole because he differed from them as to 1798. Such utterances enable us to understand what very uncomfortable neighbours some Irish Protestants must be. If my venial offence merits the bog-hole, the triangle, and the pitch-cap, what atrocities would they not feel justified in inflicting upon a "Black Papist"?

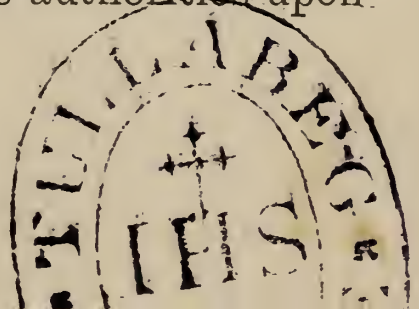
Speaking at the Wolfe Tone Celebration, Mr. J. Redmond complained, with an obvious reference to my article, that the rebellion of 1798 was not the mere revolt of a peasantry driven mad by oppression. He said:—

Some historians thought the rebellion of '98 was caused by the barbarities of English rule in Ireland, but if the movement were looked at in a broad light it would be seen that that view was false. The rebellion was a deliberate attempt to achieve national unity, and was one of the purest movements for liberty that had illumined the annals of any country.

I do not in the least object to this correction, if correction it can be called. But if I were an Irishman I think I should object. For it is not complimentary to the Irish nation to represent a spluttering insurrection in a single county as the outcome of a deliberate attempt to achieve national unity. I admit that Wolfe Tone and his friends had schemed and laboured for years to throw off English rule. But they did not wish or work for the rising in Wexford. The latter—the only serious rising in 1798—was forced on by the deliberate policy of outrage employed to prematurely explode the insurrection. It is to be hoped that the Irish nation is capable of something more worthy their nationhood in the way of rebellion than the abortive struggle which drenched Wexford with blood.

The mistakes and misrepresentations discovered in my account of the Centenary are for the most part quite immaterial to the main issue. I have gone carefully through all the corrections that have reached me, and even if I accepted as correct the assertions of the opponents of the movement of 1798, they would not affect in the very least the gravity of my indictment.

For instance, whether there were four or five Defenders killed at the battle of the Diamond, or whether there were fifty, is a mere detail on which authorities differ. Whether the larger or smaller number be correct it does not affect the main issue. Equally absurd is the stress laid upon the fact that I followed a mistaken tradition as to the precise date of the burning of Father John Murphy's Chapel at Boolevogue. I have, however, in reprinting the article amended the points where the original statement seemed fairly open to question, and in some cases have added in a note the opinion of those who differ from the authorities upon which I relied.



THE CENTENARY OF 1798.

(Map Illustrating the "Rebellion" in Ireland.

THE CENTENARY OF 1798.

PART I.

Chapter I.

Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight?
Who blushes at the name?
When cowards mock the patriot's fate,
Who hangs his head for shame?

John Kells Ingram, LL.D.

TO which question asked by Dr. Ingram, I, William Thomas Stead, humble and unworthy representative of the predominant partner in the Union with Ireland, hereby make answer as follows:—

"Yea, verily, if there be no other man in this world who will say, then will I solemnly protest and declare:—I fear to speak of Ninety-Eight; I blush to hear its name, I hang my head for shame; and am covered with confusion of face at the thought of the deeds that then were done by those who stood for England before the world."

I have just* come back from Ireland, which I hurried across from the Giant's Causeway to the Lakes of Killarney. I was not there on politics, having indeed merely revisited the Green Isle to satisfy the long-cherished desire of my wife to spend the honeymoon of our silver wedding in the Emerald Isle. But although the usual clack of party politics is silent enough in Ireland just now, the elemental factors of the Irish question crop up as the granite boulders through the heather and the ling on her moun-

* This article appeared in the July (1898) number of the *Review of Reviews*. My visit to Ireland was paid in June.

tains, and I returned feeling once more that strange overpowering afflatus that I always bring back from Ireland—a feeling of intense humiliation and foreboding alarm.

I do not think that any even among my worst enemies dare accuse me of lack of loyalty, or any shortcoming in enthusiastic devotion to the cause of the Empire. A quarter of a century ago I preached with passionate earnestness the Imperial faith, nor have I faltered in my zeal even when the once forlorn cause became popular enough to attract the time-serving votaries of the Cult of the Jumping Cat. It is indeed because of my enthusiastic devotion to the Imperial cause that Ireland always rouses such a storm of passionate regret. For Ireland is the great failure of the Empire. Ireland is the one black burning blot upon the Imperial record. Everywhere else all round the world the sun as he is greeted by Britain's morning drum-beat looks down upon populations which are content with the flag that shelters them. Here alone are discontent and animosity, no sense of allegiance to the Empire, no sentiment of loyalty to the throne. And whereas every other part of the Queen's dominions is increasing in population and in wealth, waxing mightier and mightier among the nations of the earth, Ireland alone shrinks and dwindles, her population becomes more and more insignificant compared with the total of the Imperial Muster Roll. Ireland is our reproach. Ireland is our condemnation. Everywhere else the Empire has been justified of its works. Here it has conspicuously, absolutely, and shamefully failed.

A hundred years ago we had our chance. A hundred years ago we had the alternative, offered under menace of a French invasion, of governing Ireland as we governed ourselves or of governing her as an alien province created to be fleeced and plundered for our own sovereign will and pleasure. We had just emerged from the American War, that great object-lesson which should have taught us that the cause of human freedom was more prized of Providence than the maintenance of British Empire. The French had helped the American colonists to establish their independence. The French were promising to help

the Irish to avenge their grievances. For one brief moment, when Fitzwilliam was Viceroy, it seemed as if the lesson had been taken to heart, and that England, in the hour of her adversity, was disposed to make an honest attempt to deal justly with Ireland. Alas! it was but for a moment. The Fitzwilliam Viceroyalty did not last so long as the Viceroyalty of the Aberdeens. And when Fitzwilliam quitted Dublin, John Bull hardened his heart and stiffened his neck, took the bit between his teeth, and bolted headlong down the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Down that road he is plunging still, although with occasional haltings, as conscience pricks him and as glimpses of judgment to come flash before his eyes. But "if God's in His Heaven and all's right with the world," then that judgment, though it tarry for a season, will fail not. Nor if our belief in righteousness and judgment is not a mere old wife's fable, ought we then to wish it to pass over us. For a world in which such crime as this escaped unwhipped of justice would seem to lie outside the moral order of the Universe.

I.—WHY I FEAR TO SPEAK OF '98.

No Englishman ought ever to mention the word Ireland in the hearing of the civilized world unless he first arrays himself in the sackcloth and ashes of the penitent. And when speaking of the deeds of 1798 which led up to the Act of Union in 1800, there is little more for him to say but three words, or rather one word thrice repeated, to wit :

DAMN! DAMN!! DAMN!!!

Damn! is, as the French say, "the word of the situation."

There is no other word in the whole language which so tersely and exactly expresses the only possible sentiment with which any human being not yet absolutely degenerate into sheer diabolism can regard the whole hideous story.

Mr. Gladstone used to swear at large concerning the "black-guardism" or ruffianism of the means by which the Union was

carried. Mr. Gladstone is no longer amongst us to discharge our duty in vicarious blasphemy. And yet the infamy remains.

"Do not swear, but shoot!" said the American officer whose rough-riding soldiers stumbled into the Spanish ambush before Santiago; and his was a wise word. But there are situations where shooting is out of the question, when there is nothing left to do but to curse; and if ever there was such a time, it is in Ireland to-day when we think of Ireland a century since.

Seriously speaking, there is no need of our damning, for we shall assuredly be damned in grim earnest unless the crime of a century, a crime persisted in down to this very present time, be repented of and atoned for not in phrase, but in fact. Of course, I am assuming that it is possible for nations like individuals to suffer the vengeance of the wrath of God, poured out upon the finally impenitent. If there be no God, or if there be no Day of Judgment among the nations, it is another matter. Ireland may be the sport of a malignant destiny. Or the Arm of the Lord the Avenger may be shortened so that it cannot save this afflicted remnant among the nations. But—

> There's One hath swifter feet than Crime.

Many a proud oppressor has exalted his horn on high and laughed with ribald scorn as the unseen hand traced the warning of doom in characters of living light upon the walls of his banqueting chamber; but none the less for him—and for us:—

> In the shadow, year out, year in,
> The silent headsman waits for ever.

And this may be our fate; nay, in all grim and serious earnest will be our fate, if we repent not. For, be he man or nation who, often being reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall be cut off suddenly, and that without remedy. So the word of the Lord hath spoken it of old time, and He changeth not, from everlasting to everlasting.

If ever one nation stood convicted of crime against a neighbouring nation, England stands convicted of crime to-day in her relations with Ireland—crime the most heinous, the most

incredible, the most utterly alien to all the qualities which Englishmen respect and admire in the character of their country. And that crime, which had its origin in centuries far beyond our present survey, culminated in 1798, and is being perpetuated, although in milder fashion, down to the present day.

I am not stating anything that can be gainsaid. The indictment is overwhelming.* The evidence is incontrovertible. I do not regard the conquest of Ireland as a crime. It is often necessary to conquer and sometimes to be conquered. The conqueror is judged, not by his conquest, but by the use he makes of it afterwards. What makes me feel so exceeding mad when contemplating this century of shame is not any sentimental feeling about a crushed nationality. Our Empire is a compost of crushed nationalities. What I cannot tolerate is the consciousness that our present relations, which began in Rape enforced by Murder, were established by Corruption, and are to this day maintained for Rapine. Rape, Murder, Corruption, and Rapine! These four words sum up the story of the century.

It is difficult to write calmly about such a record. "On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm."

Nevertheless, I will endeavour to state briefly and as calmly as the circumstances permit the salient facts of 1798.

II.—AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

The period was one of grave Imperial peril. We had just emerged from the war that cost us our American colonies, to be confronted with the nascent might of Revolutionary France. American influence, even then potent in Ireland, stimulated among the Presbyterians of the North a daring hope that in England's extremity might be found Ireland's opportunity. That they were justified in such an expectation who can deny?

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* See Appendix, "The Most Damnable Indictment."

The end of the eighteenth century had brought to the ground many a hoary edifice of chartered wrong. Empires and monarchies older than that which owned George III. as its head had fallen before the revolutionary hurricane. Across the Atlantic a handful of embattled farmers, less numerous than those of Ireland, had wrested liberty and independence from king and parliament. That the Irish were bound to cherish the desire if they were men and not brute beasts is equally incontrovertible. By every principle, even of modern Toryism, the state of things in Ireland in 1796 justified, nay demanded, rebellion. Looking back upon the whole sickening story from the standpoint even of a latter-day Conservative, it is impossible to deny that the Irish, especially the Irish Catholics, would have failed to deserve to rank among human beings if they had not ardently longed and diligently plotted for the overthrow of the hateful system of misrule of which they were the victims.

Far more difficult is it to defend this unfortunate people for lacking the true revolutionary temper. Irishmen then, as now, as always, have been far too easy, far too complacent, far too much inclined to forget and forgive. If only the five millions of Irish in 1780-1800 had been but dour Saxon churls, history had told another tale, nor would we this day have been lamenting the damnable results which flowed from our not having any resisting force sufficiently strong to teach us that the way of transgressors is hard. It is, of course, unfair to blame the Irish for the consequences, the carefully calculated consequences, of our own policy. For a hundred years the flower of Irish manhood had been driven to find the only field for its ambition in the service of foreign monarchs. Irish historians declare that between the Treaty of Limerick and the end of the eighteenth century 500,000 Irishmen fought and died as soldiers of fortune in the armies of France and Spain. A race whose natural chiefs were to be found in every camp in Europe excepting their own could not be expected to display the faculty for organizing successful revolt. Neither would it be reasonable to expect a people from whom the fierce harrow of the penal laws had but barely been raised that capacity and courage which are indispensable if rebellion is to be success-

ful. We reaped as we had sown. We had hamstrung the Irish, and they limped accordingly. A healthy spirit of resistance on the part of the governed is as essential for the good government of nations as the capacity to command on the part of their rulers. Just as Parliamentary Government becomes impossible without a strongly organized Opposition, so all Government tends to become an abomination unless among the governed there is both the will and the power to hurl the whole administration into the abyss if it presumes too far upon the long-suffering of man. Our greatest trouble in Ireland, from the point of view of the good government of Ireland and the tranquillity and contentment of the Empire, has not been that the revolutionary forces were too strong, but that they have always been deplorably weak, so weak that coercion, ever seeming to be the line of least resistance, has lured successive administrations far from the straight path by which alone Ireland could have been made an integral part of a self-governed empire.

In the early nineties it seemed as if the Protestant Liberals were about to succeed by constitutional means in securing the emancipation of the whole nation. Ever since the enrolment of the Irish Volunteers had led to the establishment of Irish independence, the hopes of patriots had been justified by the astonishing progress that was visible on every side. Trade improved, penal laws were modified, the population increased, internal tranquillity appeared established on a firmer footing. Even the old rancorous feeling between Protestant and Catholic was so far abated that United Irish Societies were formed, the members of which swore to form a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every religious persuasion for the purpose of obtaining an equal, full, and adequate representation of all the people of Ireland.

When Lord Fitzwilliam came as Viceroy it seemed as if the prosperity of the country was about to culminate in the legal emancipation of all its people. But when Pitt suddenly recalled Fitzwilliam and reversed the whole progress of the movement towards justice and progress in Ireland, the scene changed. Ireland passed, as it were, in a moment under the baleful shadow

of her adverse fate. Reading over in cold blood, after the lapse of a hundred years, the consequences of that fatal surrender to the forces of evil, I began to realize for the first time the justice of Coleridge's terrible war eclogue, "Fire, Famine, Slaughter," in which Pitt was doomed to the everlasting burning. The three dread Sisters meet to discuss the deeds they have been doing far and wide over the surface of the war-wasted world. But they shrink from naming the author of their fell activity. "Letters four compose his name;" but they refuse to pronounce it :—

No! No! No!
Spirits hear what spirits tell,
'Twill make a holiday in Hell,
No! No! No!
Myself I named him once below;
And all the souls that damned be
Leaped up at once and danced for glee—
They no longer heeded me.

Each describes the horrors Pitt has done, and each at the end exults in the honour they propose to their patron fiend. But Fire, who "from Ireland came," outdoes both her sisters, declaring—

I alone am faithful! I
Cling to him everlastingly.

Whatever may be Pitt's parlous state to-day, there is no doubt that the fiery doom clings like a Nessus shirt to the Empire in whose name his crime was committed.

The reason for this strong, and one may say extravagant, feeling concerning Pitt is due to the fact that at a critical moment, nay, at the critical moment in the history of Ireland, he suddenly deserted the policy of peace and conciliation, and embarked upon a policy of bloodshed and oppression, from the ultimate consequences of which we are, to this day, unable to emancipate ourselves.

III.—TO HELL OR CONNAUGHT.

The recall of Lord Fitzwilliam was recognized, alike by friend and foe, as a signal of war. Bitter discontent began in summer to replace the sanguine hopes of the early spring. All power was vested in the hands of the party of intolerant ascendency, and the Liberals and the Catholics began in despair to conspire. At first the conspiracy went little further than the strengthening of the secret society of United Irishmen. Its stronghold was in Protestant Ulster. It drew its inspiration from the success of the American colonists, and it whispered under its breath of the possibility of enlisting on behalf of downtrodden Erin the flaming sword of France.

While these brooding sentiments were still inarticulate, an outburst of savagery on the part of the fanatical Tory Protestants of the North brought matters to a head. A collision, afterwards dignified with the preposterous title of the Battle of the Diamond, took place on September 21st, 1795, between the Protestant Peep-o'-Day Boys and the Catholic Defenders. It was out of that victory that the Orange Society was born. It burst full-fledged from its shell, red with ravin in tooth and claw, and proceeded at once to establish a reign of terror in the county of Armagh. It sounds almost incredible, but the facts are undisputed, that the beginning of the bloody business which culminated in the Act of Union was a deliberate and organized attempt made by the Protestants of Armagh to extirpate the Catholic population of that county.

On December 28th thirty magistrates of the county passed a resolution declaring that the county of Armagh was at that moment in a state of grievous disorder; that "the Roman Catholic inhabitants are grievously oppressed by lawless persons unknown, who attack and plunder their houses by night, and threaten them with instant destruction unless they abandon

immediately their land and habitations." The lawless persons unknown were Protestants, who, coveting their neighbours' lands, and hating their neighbours' creed, conceived the happy thought of effecting both objects at one and the same time. They organized themselves into a Banditti of Murderers under a Committee of Elders, who harried their Catholic neighbours, burning their houses, seizing their goods, despoiling them of their lands. To such a pass things came that, according to the history of the time, no fewer than from five to seven thousand persons were in the course of twelve months either killed or driven to wander homeless and starving on the hills.

Lord Gosford, Governor of Armagh, a Protestant of the Protestants, and one of the most extensive landowners in the county, certified to the existence of a state of things which, however terrible it may appear to us, utterly failed to rouse the Government of the day. Not one of the bandits was ever punished. Lord Gosford said :—

> It is no secret, that a persecution, accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty which have in all ages distinguished that dreadful calamity, is now raging in this county ; neither age nor sex, &c., is sufficient to excite mercy, much less to afford protection. The only crime which the wretched objects of this ruthless persecution are charged with, is a crime indeed of easy proof ; it is simply a profession of the Roman Catholic faith, or an intimate connection with a person professing this faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this new species of delinquency, and the sentence they have denounced is equally concise and terrible—it is nothing less than a confiscation of *all property*, and an *immediate banishment*. It would be extremely painful, and surely unnecessary, to detail the horrors that attend the execution of so rude and tremendous a proscription—a proscription that certainly exceeds, in the comparative number of those it consigns to ruin and misery, every example that ancient or modern history can supply ; for when have we heard, or in what story of human cruelties have we read, of *more than half the inhabitants of a populous country* deprived at one blow of the means, as well as the fruits of their industry, and driven, in the midst of an inclement season, to seek a shelter for themselves and their helpless families where chance may guide them ! This is no exaggerated picture of the horrid scenes now acting in this county.

Notices were posted on the cottages of the Catholics ordering them to be taking themselves to Hell or Connaught. Although sometimes they were told that Connaught would not receive them and they must go to Hell. And a Hell on earth, a Hell of

fire and blood, awaited them without fail if they neglected the warning to quit.*

The Irish Administration, instead of taking energetic measures against the marauders, allowed the bloody work to pass unheeded. But the unhappy victims of the Protestant outrages, if young and fit food for powder, were packed on board His Majesty's navy, which at that time, thanks largely to the method of recruiting, was seething with discontent that was soon to blaze out in the mutiny of the Nore.

When the Irish Parliament assembled in January, 1796, the Government passed an Insurrection Act and an Indemnity Act, nominally directed not against the Protestant Bandits of Armagh, whose terrorism was eloquently described by Grattan, but against the Catholic Defenders, who were accused of making insurrections, tumults, and riots. Magistrates were indemnified for whatever they might have done illegally since January 1st, 1795, under the pretext of suppressing insurrection. The administration of unlawful oaths was made felony, punishable by death. Magistrates were empowered to sweep up all idle vagrants and persons with no visible means of subsistence, and send them on board the fleet. Unlimited powers were given to imprison, arrest, and search houses for arms, and any two magistrates could arrest and condemn to serve on the fleet any person or persons who should publish or sell any printed sheet which the magistrates chose to regard as seditious. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended by a Bill introduced later in the year, and Ireland was flung, gagged, handcuffed, and helpless, at the feet of men whose legitimate and lineal descendants to-day are the ruffians of Shankhill Road, Belfast.

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* It appeals to the sense of humour to read in the *Belfast News Letter* that, "With respect to the banishment of Roman Catholic families, Mr. Stead may be informed there is ample evidence to prove that most of them banished themselves,(!) after wrecking their own houses to obtain compensation from the Grand Jury. They went chiefly to Mayo and Roscommon, whose inhabitants were glad to get rid of the troublesome strangers."

IV.—HELPERS ACROSS THE SEA.

The action of the Government convinced Wolfe Tone that the situation was desperate enough to justify an appeal to the French to intervene on behalf of the Irish people. He arrived in France immediately after the assembly of the Irish Parliament. A few months later, after the Insurrection Act had been passed into law, the leaders of the United Irishmen met and decided to begin the military organization of the country. There was an Executive Directory of Four, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald was nominated Commander-in-Chief. But there was no dream of taking the field unless the French sent an expedition. They were strong in numbers, but they entirely distrusted their own ability to make head against the English without outside help.

That help long promised them at last was sent to their aid. On December 15th, 1796, General Hoche, with 13,975 French troops and 20 pieces of field artillery and arms for 45,000 men, embarked at Brest. Besides the transports, there were seventeen sail of the line, thirteen frigates, and five corvettes. Alas, the wind was foul! Hoche and the admiral got separated from the main body, and only a portion of the fleet anchored on December 23rd in Bantry Bay. "The infernal easterly wind," as poor Wolfe Tone called it, got worse instead of better. They were six days in Bantry Bay, within 500 yards of the shore, without being able to disembark. They were dispersed four times in four days, and one of their ships was lost. Ship after ship dragged her anchors and had to put out to sea to escape destruction. At last it was evident nothing could be done. A perfect hurricane raged over the sea as the year came to its dismal close. By New Year's Day the expedition was back in Brest without having fired a shot going or coming.

What a disaster for the cause of both England and Ireland that the wind blew so foul! If only Hoche with fourteen thousand French troops had made a good landing on Irish soil

the whole hideous story of the Rebellion and the Union would never have been told. The French, it is true, could never have kept their footing in Ireland, but after the old *régime* had been cleared out the Irish would have been able to have negotiated much better terms with England than those which were forced upon them at the point of the bayonet. It is vain wailing over the irrecoverable past, but—if only that wind had not blown into the infernal abyss the hope, the dawning hope, of liberty and justice in Ireland!

This, however, at least must not be set down to the debit of the English Government. It did not deserve the respite. Instead of profiting by the failure of the hopes of the revolutionists, they plunged more ruthlessly than ever upon the path of repression and of violence. Ten thousand men were added to the militia. General Lake, a truculent ruffian, whose character may well be discerned in the sulphurous fury of his letters, was Commander-in-Chief, with a free hand to strike terror in Ulster. He wrote on one occasion:—

"I much fear those villains" (the Presbyterians of Ulster) "will not give us the opportunity of treating them in the summary way we all wish. You may rest assured they won't have much mercy if we can once begin. Surely the *Northern Star*" (a Protestant Belfast paper) "should be stopped. . . . . May I not be allowed to seize and burn the whole apparatus? Belfast must be punished most severely. I'll do all I can to thin the country of these rebellious scoundrels by sending them on board the tender." He complained that complete martial law had not been proclaimed. "I wish we had complete power to destroy their houses, or try some of them by *our law* if they did not bring in their arms."

The office of the *Northern Star* was sacked, the editor flung into gaol, and the paper extinguished.

Grattan, Curran, and the Fitzgeralds abandoned the Irish Parliament in despair. The excesses of General Lake in the North drove desperate men by thousands into the ranks of the United Irishmen. The Ancient Britons, a regiment of Welsh cavalry, were employed in scouring the country nominally looking for arms, in reality terrorizing and looting the peasantry. The military were authorized to act at their sole discretion pretty much as they pleased whenever they choose to pretend they had discovered an illegal assemblage.

The kind of thing that went on may be imagined from such an entry as this:—

In June, 1797, a party of the Ancient Britons (a fencible regiment), commanded by Sir Watkin William Wynne, were ordered to examine the house of Mr. Rice, an innkeeper in the town of Coolavil, County of Armagh, for arms; but on making very diligent search, none could be found. There were some country people drinking in the house, and discoursing their *native language*; the soldiers damned their *eternal Irish souls*, said they were speaking *treason*, and instantly fell on them with their swords, and maimed several desperately. Miss Rice was so badly wounded that her life was despaired of, and her father escaped with much difficulty, after having received many cuts from the sabres of these assassins.

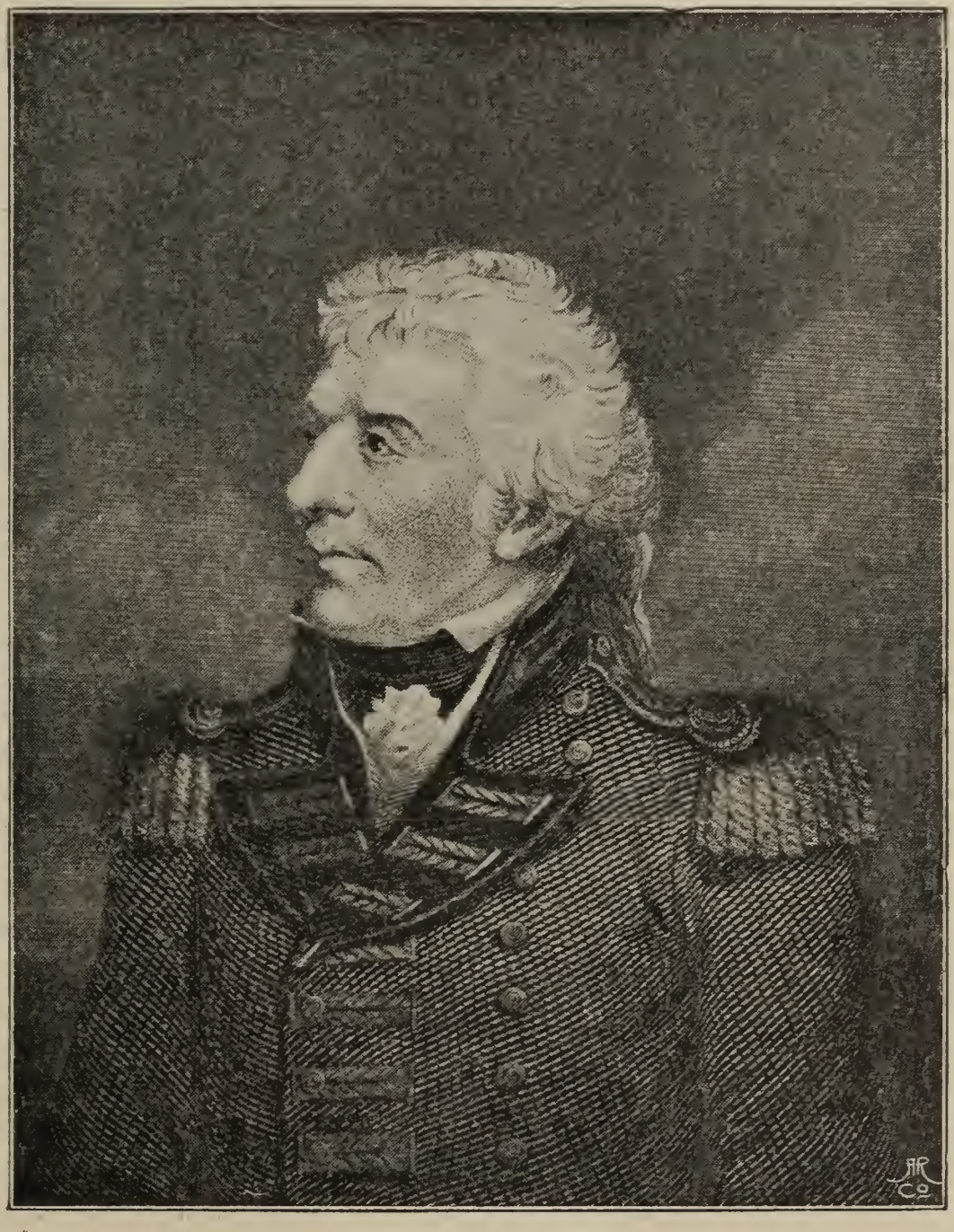
All this while there had been no attempt at insurrection anywhere. The Government, with guilty conscience, was desperately afraid of the strength and secrecy of the United Irish Society, but although it allowed the Orangemen to drive 1,400 Catholic families homeless upon the mountains, and employed General Lake to terrorize the North with his dragoons, it failed in provoking the miserable peasantry into insurrection.

It became necessary for more drastic measures to be taken. The one desire of the Government was to force the disaffected population into open rebellion, to get the United Irishmen to abandon the lawful attitude of passive resistance, so that they might have at them with bayonet and musket ball. The United Irishmen, however, understood too well the wishes of their oppressors. They persistently kept aloof from overt action. They pushed their organization into the South, with the result that where their members were numerous faction-fighting, drunkenness, and the like almost disappeared. It was the strange calm and good order of the sullenly disaffected peasantry that baffled the Government and drove them to those excesses of savagery which, alas! succeeded at last in effecting their fell purpose.

The Irish suffered horribly, but they still despaired of being able to do anything for their own liberties without help from outside. They continued to manufacture pikes in every rural smithy, to enrol members of the brotherhood pledged to unite Irishmen in order that Ireland might be free; but no thought

of an appeal to arms without assistance from oversea appears to have crossed the minds of any of the leaders.

France was preoccupied elsewhere; but some of the allies of France might strike a blow for Ireland. So thought the indomitable Wolfe Tone, and he was not far wrong. It seems



GENERAL LAKE.

almost incredible to us Englishmen to-day, but it is a simple fact, that in the summer of 1797 the then Government of Holland actually equipped a powerful fleet on the Texel, and put on board fifteen thousand Dutch troops, with eighty pieces of artillery, for the express purpose of landing them in Ireland to

co-operate with the Irish Nationalists. Sixteen sail of the line, with eight or ten frigates—the whole of the Dutch navy and all their army were to be ventured in the cause of the Irish Revolution. Van Leyden, one of the Dutch Committee for Foreign Affairs, remarked that he had travelled through Ireland, and, to judge from the luxury of the rich and extreme misery of the poor, no country in Europe had so crying a necessity for a revolution. To which Wolfe Tone replied that one great motive of their conduct was the conviction of the wretched state of the peasantry and the determination if possible to amend it.

So it was agreed that the Dutch were to sail for the Irish coast, there to land fifteen thousand men with three months' rations, who would serve as the centre round which the United Irishmen were to rally. On July 4th—notable day!—the Dutch were all ready to start. Admiral Duncan, it is true, with only eleven sail of the line, was lying off the Texel, but the superiority of the Dutch fleet was such that they anticipated little difficulty in brushing him on one side. But it was not to be. Everything was ready that man could provide. But steam had not then been applied to navigation, and man has not even to-day mastered the secret of the winds. The wind set in steadily, as foul for the Dutch as foul could be. Wolfe Tone raved and swore, invoking Hell and Allah alternately to vent his wrath, but the wind for two long months blew dead in the teeth of the Dutch fleet. They could not leave the Texel in July, neither could they start in August. The troops on board were consuming the supplies provided for the campaign in Ireland. Meanwhile grim old Admiral Duncan was being reinforced until his fleet was as strong as that of Holland. So there was nothing for it but to abandon the Irish scheme. "It is most terrible," said Wolfe Tone. "Twice within nine months England has been saved by the wind. It seems as if the very elements had conspired to perpetuate our slavery and protect the insolence and oppression of our tyrants."

Not till the beginning of October did the Dutch fleet succeed in leaving the Texel, and then its destination was not Ireland. Off Camperdown it was met and destroyed by Admiral Duncan, whose title of the Earl of Camperdown still remains as a kind of

melancholy inscription on the grave of what was once a great hope for Ireland.

The Irish, however, did not cease to hope, nor their oppressors to fear, that sooner or later the French would be able to throw an expedition into disaffected Ireland. The Government, therefore, appear to have determined at any cost and by any means to provoke a premature rebellion, so that they might be able to drown it in blood before the French were ready to interfere.

V.—A GOVERNMENT-MADE INSURRECTION.

That any Government, let alone a nominally Christian and Protestant Government, could deliberately plot and plan to force its own subjects into a semblance of insurrection in order that it might have free licence to massacre without let or hindrance, is in itself a sufficiently terrible accusation to make, even if the means which they employed to prod the peasantry into rebellion had been the most unobjectionable that the wit of an archangel could have devised. But the measures ultimately resolved upon might have been devised in Hell and executed by a *posse comitatus* of fiends.

Unfortunately there seems to be little question as to the facts. They were attested publicly and formally in the most striking fashion by the refusal of one British officer after another to be made the tool of the infernal plot. Lord Carhampton, who in 1797 was Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Ireland, was no sentimentalist. He had repeatedly shown a disposition to go even in advance of the law in suppressing, by the most ruthless severity, any disposition to rebel. At the close of 1797, finding that the troops under his command were affected by the Nationalist enthusiasm of the capital, he withdrew them from Dublin, and established them in camps outside the city.

He did this avowedly in order to prevent the spread of disaffection in the ranks. He was overruled, the camps were broken up, and the soldiers marched back into barracks. Lord

Carhampton, soldier though he was, and accustomed to obey, could not stand this. He resigned his high position, publicly declaring that "some deep and insidious design of the Minister was in agitation, for, instead of suppressing, the Irish Government was obviously disposed to excite an insurrection." Lord Carhampton was right, nor had his successor to wait long before having the nature of the deep and insidious design revealed in all its horrors.

That successor was Sir Ralph Abercrombie, a brave and capable soldier, whose name stands high among the warriors who made a good fight against Napoleon. Immediately after his appointment he made an effort to restore discipline into the troops under his command. Of one kind and another these armed men numbered 130,000, and were as disreputable a lot of ruffians in uniform as ever mustered under the British flag. Sir Ralph's first General Order began :—

> The very disgraceful frequency of courts-martial, and the many complaints of the conduct of the troops in this Kingdom having, too unfortunately, proved the army to be in a state of licentiousness which must render it formidable to every one but the enemy, the Commander-in-Chief, &c., &c.

This was dated February 26th. Such an army, however, was just the weapon that Pitt and Castlereagh—soon to be supreme at the Castle—needed for the success of their plan of "prematurely exploding the rebellion." No foreign enemy was then threatening a landing on Irish shores. The people, beyond the diligent manufacture of pikes and secret enrolment in the ranks of the United Irishmen, were most prevokingly quiet. "Lie low and do nothing till the French come" was the watchword of the revolutionary leaders, which was most religiously obeyed.

If the French came the army would be formidable to every one but the enemy. But before they came it was one of the most efficient means that the art of man or fiend could devise for torturing the peasantry into maddened revolt. Having such an instrument in their hands, Pitt and Castlereagh determined to use it, and use it without mercy.

The country was ominously peaceful. Here and there the peasantry had laid hands upon stores of arms, but according to

the Commander-in-Chief there was no resistance to the authority of the Government. Everywhere the people cowered before the armed might of the Administration, which, having a giant's strength, used it like a giant, without ruth or mercy. Transportation beyond the seas, with probability of sudden death, was a sentence inflicted summarily without trial or appeal upon the youth of whole villages whenever it pleased the authorities to desire to replenish the company of any of His Majesty's ships. Others were banished to work in the mines in Prussia. The search for arms was vigorously persisted in, houses were burnt down night after night, and thousands of wanderers, who had been driven from their farms by Orange bandits, were starving on the hills. Ireland was under coercion of the most drastic kind. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, the Insurrection Act was in force, and legal indemnity was assured to all authorities who trangressed the law in their zeal for order.

The Government, well served by a brigade of informers, who deserve the highest place in the annals of infamy, were perfectly well aware of the aims, policy, and plans of the revolutionary leaders. They captured the Leinster delegates on March 12th the moment they wished to take them, as easily as a schoolboy takes a nestful of young larks by putting his hat over them. The field being now clear, they decided to force on the insurrection without loss of time.

They decided that the time had come for their master-stroke. All that they had done, hitherto cruel and abominable as it was, had failed to spur the people into rebellion. It was necessary to do something more, something worse, something which human nature—at least, Irish human nature—could not stand.

Incendiarism, domiciliary visits, arbitrary arrests, transportation, cold-blooded massacre had all been tried, but the Irish would not rise. They bided their time, sharpened their pikes, and prayed the good Lord in His infinite mercy to send the French to their deliverance. According to Sir Ralph Abercrombie, the Commander-in-Chief, "Every crime, every cruelty that could be committed by Cossacks and Calmucks had been transacted in Ireland," and still the people patiently bent to the

storm. But "the resources of civilization," in the British sense, were not exhausted. One weapon in the vast enginery of Hell lay ready to the hands of Castlereagh and his master in London, the efficacy of which could not be doubted. But could man of woman born be found to set it in motion?

VI.—THE LAST RESOURCE OF "CIVILIZATION."

Of all the nations the Irish have pre-eminence for their fine sense of the supreme importance of stainless chastity. For the honour of their women is the point of honour with this chivalrous and ardent race. They bear hardships without repining, bend submissively before the oppression of arbitrary power; but no extreme of privation, no squalid horror of overcrowded cabin, has broken down the sense of profound reverence with which even the most miserable Irish kern regards his womankind. There is no woman in an Irish cabin that is not to its inmates of the sex of the Madonna, partaking, whether maid or matron, in something of the mystic glory of the Mother of God. The Irish might stand every extremity of coercive despotism if only it concerned their men and their possessions; but—touch their women! Then at any cost, without even counting of costs, the Celt would strike.

So it appeared to the British authorities and Irish governing class in the spring of 1798 that the problem of forcing on a premature explosion of the disaffected sentiment among the people was capable of an immediate solution. All other means had failed; but Rape would not fail. So Rape it was decided it should be.

There were certain preliminaries necessary before the supreme crime could be perpetrated. On March 30th the kingdom was declared to be in rebellion, and martial law proclaimed over the whole of Ireland. But before the next step could be taken, Sir Ralph Abercrombie refused any longer to act as Commander-in-Chief. He saw too clearly what his predecessor had but dimly

divined. There was no rebellion. The Army itself was the most insubordinate element in the kingdom. He publicly denounced the proceedings of the Government as a ridiculous farce, the true nature of which was obvious to every one:—

> They have declared the Kingdom in rebellion when the orders of his Excellency might be carried over the whole Kingdom by an orderly dragoon, or a writ executed without any difficulty, except in a few places on the mountains.

Ridiculous farce it might be; it was not the less a tragic crime. For the moment Sir Ralph Abercrombie washed his hands of the whole bloody business, the conspirators at the Castle unmasked. The secretary to Lord Camden, Mr. Pelham, followed Sir Ralph Abercrombie into retirement. Lord Castlereagh, who succeeded Mr. Pelham, found in General Lake a pliant instrument for his designs.*

A good deal has been written of the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition. Most of us at one time or another have shuddered at the description of the infernal mechanisms of torture with which the bodies of heretics were racked in agony for the glory of God and the salvation of the soul. Ireland was now about to be subjected to torture not less keen by an instrument not less deadly than any plied by the Familiars of the Inquisition. Torquemada himself never dreamed of a more terrible instrument of torture than that which Lord Castlereagh found ready to his hand in the licentious soldiery of the Army of Occupation. Boot and thumbekins, rack and "The Maiden," red-hot searing irons and molten lead, all these appliances of the dungeon lacked the supreme efficiency and potency of this gross machine of torment, now about to be applied to the womanhood of Ireland.

When I was writing "The Maiden Tribute," just thirteen years ago this very month, I remember asking one who had held high office in Scotland Yard if it was really true that the violation of unwilling victims actually took place in the secret places of London vice. "Certainly," he replied, "there is not a doubt of

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* General Lake still seems to be regarded as a hero by devout Protestants, who have assailed me for maligning his memory.

it." "But," I replied incredulously, "the very thought of their piteous crying is enough to raise Hell!" "Tut," he answered, "it does not even raise the neighbours." It is one of the things for which I shall ever be most grateful, that I was able in 1885 so to echo the sighing of those sad captives as to send a shudder of sympathetic horror through the world. Imagine then how I feel when I am confronted by the appalling spectacle of a British Minister deliberately preparing for the establishment of universal rape as the only effective method of bringing about the extinction of the very limited independence then enjoyed by Ireland!

Twenty-two years ago all Britain rose in indignant horror to denounce the unspeakable Turk for perpetrating the Bulgarian horrors. It was not the mere massacre of the Bulgarians that roused the British public—it was the violation and the outrages by which the massacres were accompanied. Yet the worst that Chefket and Achmet, and the rest of the agents of the Great Assassin accomplished in the hot fury of suppressing the abortive rising in the Balkans was comparatively venial. They were Moslems. They outraged and massacred people of alien race, language, and religion. Outrage with them was but the natural outburst of savage lust excited by bloodshed, and permitted as an incident of the stamping out of a rebellion; nevertheless, this comparatively trivial resort to lust as an instrument of terror cost the Sultan his sovereignty on the Danube. In Ireland the centenary of 1798 recalls the fact that similar outrages, far more foul because employed in cold blood over a wider area for a much longer period of time, were resorted to by a British Minister in furtherance of British policy; they were used not to punish a rebellion, but to provoke one, and—oh, the pity and the horror of it!—instead of costing us a kingdom, it enabled the perpetrators to complete the conquest of Ireland.

Even Lord Castlereagh was too conscious of the enormity of the crime which he was perpetrating to call it by its proper name. Had a spade been called a spade, the Government would have proclaimed as their reason for the declaration of martial law their resolve to provoke a rebellion of the men by arranging for the violation of their women. In 130,000 licentious soldiery, in-

flamed with every brutal passion, Castlereagh had the apparatus of outrage ready to hand. All that was needed to be done was to give the signal for action. No time was lost after Sir Ralph Abercrombie's resignation. The proclamation was made that everywhere throughout the province of Leinster the people were to be compelled to admit within their houses, to bed and to board, the brutal and licentious soldiers whose lawless violence had been the despair of Abercrombie. This system of Rape by Order of the Administration was disguised by the euphemism of Free Quarters. But by whatever name you call it, the thing itself remains the same.

The Irish cabin is not a residence that contains spare rooms for the accommodation of strangers. The sleeping space is rigidly limited to the elementary needs of the family. The arrangements for privacy are so primitive that even within the limits of the family it is a marvel that chastity is so strictly observed. But the whole domestic economy breaks down when strange men are thrust into the little human nest. Free Quarters meant thrusting armed and licentious men into the bedroom and bed of the peasant women. Free Quarters thus of necessity meant not only free board and free lodging, it meant also Free Rape.

The peasantry were unarmed. The truculent ruffians whom they were compelled to lodge and feed were armed to the teeth. Resistance to any outrage was liable to be avenged by death. No Inquisitor of Spain had his victim more absolutely at his disposal than the women of Leinster were at the disposal of the British Government, when in order to infuriate the people into the suicidal rising of despair, Free Quarters made Rape the official Order of the Day.

It is a hideous thing to say. How much more hideous a thing, then, to do? For it was done even as Lord Castlereagh and his colleagues intended it. Lest it should not be done effectually, two regiments of Hessian mercenaries were brought over from Germany in order that differences of race and of language might remove the last barrier of compassion which might have stayed the hand of the despoiler.

Baron Hussey, an old veteran who had seen much service in the hard-fought borderland between Muscovite and Moslem, declared to Mr. Tealing, on the faith of a Christian and the honour of a soldier, that he had never witnessed such horrors before as resulted from the system of Free Quarters.

"No man," said he, "dare impeach my loyalty or question my respect for the throne; but ere I consent to receive those ruffians within my walls, to destroy my property and pollute the sanctuary of my dwelling, I shall die on my threshold with arms in my hands, and my body shall oppose a barrier to their entrance."

"A CROPPY SMITHY" AT HOARTOWN, CO. WEXFORD.
(It was at this place that the pikes were made for the use of the rebels.)

All races would have resented such outrages, but the Irish, being more than others sensitive to insults to their women, were driven to madness. Who has not read the stirring appeal of Virginius in Macaulay's noble lay, and felt the force of the pathetic appeal?—

Spare us the unspeakable wrong, the unutterable shame
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame,
Lest when our latest hope is fled, ye taste of our despair,
And learn by proof in some wild hour, how much the wretched dare.

Alas! in Ireland the oppressor made his book upon that very despair. He knew what the Irish peasant would dare in the hour of madness and despair, and knowing it, calmly prepared in advance to take advantage of the consequences of his crime.

Compared with the infinite infamy of Free Quarters all other crimes fade into insignificance, even those which the Government employed to intensify the torture of the unfortunate people. History has much to say of the pitch-cap, that rude plaster of molten pitch clapped upon the close-cropped skull of the wretched peasant who had offended the pride or excited the suspicion of his military tyrant. It was a diabolic improvement upon the scalping-knife of the Red Indian, and the memory of it still lingers in the mind as an illustration of the climax of man's inhumanity to man. The lash was also freely employed, and various other methods of torture. Summary execution was frequent, and as many as thirty houses would be burnt in one night. But pitch-caps, floggings, burnings, and shootings altogether do not convey so clear and so damning an impression of the crime from which the Union springs as this much overlooked but supreme and dominant factor in the whole terrible business, the unspeakable horror of which is veiled by the phrase "Free Quarters." Like slavery, of which it was the rude and brutal temporary counterpart, it was the sum of all villainies.

*And it succeeded!**

VII.—HELL LET LOOSE.

Martial law and free quarters were proclaimed on March 30th. The maddened people bore it for one month, but before the

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* And there are those who still exult in its success. Mr. Dowsell, in *The Land Roll*, after deploring Abercrombie's leniency, records exultingly that after his appointment, "Lake set to work with his men, the loyal Irish yeomanry, men whose friends had been murdered, and who had themselves been marked for death, and it is no wonder that, under such circumstances, these men acted with ferocity. In a month Lake and his troops crippled the rebellion in and about Dublin."

second month passed human nature could bear no more, and Lord Castlereagh had his will.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the Commander-in-Chief of the United Irishmen, was arrested on the 19th of May. On the 23rd of the same month Leinster broke out in a confused, helpless, aimless insurrection. It began with stopping the mail coaches, it ended in the wholesale massacre of peasants, mobs armed with pikes, by horse, foot, and artillery. In Dublin, Meath, and Kildare all resemblance of resistance was trodden out in two days. 150 insurgents fell in the attack on Naas gaol, 130 in the defeat at Kilcullen. Of the 1,500 who attacked Carlow 400 were killed, 100 burned alive, and 200 others were hanged or shot after the fighting was over. 400 insurgents were dispersed by 35 dragoons near Rathfarnham, and 350 were massacred after capitulation at the Gibbet Rath at Kildare; when another 350 perished at Tara Hill, the insurrection in Dublin, Meath, and Kildare was stamped out with a loss to the Government of less than a score of troopers. Castlereagh had not miscalculated the resources at his disposal. The maddened peasantry had fallen into his snare, and all that remained was a *battue*.

It was otherwise in Wexford, where alone the insurgents made a tolerable stand. At first it seemed as if it would be at Wexford as in Meath and Kildare, but Father John Murphy, of Boolevogue, placed himself at the head of an insurgent band which defeated contingent after contingent of the British garrison, until by June 4th the insurgents were in possession of the whole county. Wexford, Enniscorthy, Gorey, were in their hands. Only Ross, Newtown Barry, and Duncannon Fort remained in the possession of the Government. For a brief moment it seemed as if Wexford were destined to avenge the wrongs of Ireland. But the failure of the attack on New Ross on June 5th, followed by the failure to pursue an advantage at Arklow on June 9th, marked the turn of the tide. In vain did the patriot priests muster their thousands at Vinegar Hill. On June 21st, General Lake, at the head of 13,000 men, surrounded the camp, poured shot and shell for hours into the insurgent ranks, and then

swept them before him in headlong rout. Eight days after, by the goodness of an avenging Nemesis, it was permitted to the Irish to fall upon and exterminate the Welsh cavalry regiment of Ancient Britons, whose outrages had been of the worst, but this was the last flicker of success.

THE CAMP ON VINEGAR HILL.

The momentary panic occasioned by the successes of the insurgents in Wexford, the passion excited by the natural but regrettable reprisals—such as the burning of four-score * prisoners in the barn at Scullabogue—and the massacre of half as many at the bridge at Wexford, led to the absence of all restraint in the exaction of vengeance. Hell was let loose on the unfortunate

* There is endless controversy as to the precise number who perished. Grant that the victims were twice as numerous as the Unionists contend, what difference does that make ?

country. In towns, grisly heads of decapitated insurgents grinned from spikes upon the passers-by. In the country the smoking ruins of homesteads and the bleaching bones of the slaughtered were met on every side. On one occasion the insurgents were exasperated to attack the yeomanry by discover-

THE MASSACRE AT SCULLABOGUE.

ing through the country as they came along, several dead men with their skulls split asunder, their bowels ripped open, and their throats cut across, besides some dead women and children. They even saw the dead bodies of two women, about which their surviving children were creeping and bewailing them! These sights hastened the insurgent force to Gorey, where their exasperation was considerably augmented by discovering the pigs in the street devouring the bodies of nine men, who had been hanged the day before, with several others recently shot, and some still expiring.

So liberally did the pigs in some districts live and thrive upon the corpses of the peasantry, that for some time afterwards bacon from those parts could find no purchaser. But murder, rapine, incendiarism, cold-blooded torture, all these count for less as indicating the real nature of the way in which order was re-established, than the boast said to have been made by officers of rank that, within certain large districts, not a woman had been left undefiled; and upon observation, in answer, that the sex must then have been very complying, the reply was, that the bayonet removed all squeamishness.

No doubt. And in that phrase lies the secret, the open secret, of British methods in dealing with Ireland from that time even till to-day.

After Wexford had risen and been trampled into submission, the insurrection broke out in an aimless fashion in Antrim. On June 7th the insurgents seized the town of Antrim, from which, however, they were almost immediately dislodged. Similar attempts made against Larne, Ballymena, and Ballycastle were equally unsuccessful. In County Down on June 9th a body of peasants, who had been burning the house of an informer, near Saintfield, attacked a small force of horse and foot and drove them into Belfast. They held Windmill Hill till the 12th, when they were dispersed chiefly by artillery fire. In Cork 300 or 400 pikemen attacked about the same number of militia near Ballynascarty, but were driven off with a loss of nearly one-half their number.

The last act of the "Rebellion" of 1798 was the sudden and unexpected arrival of Colonel Humbert with three ships and 1,000 Frenchmen at Killala, which they occupied on August 22nd. Humbert, taking with him 800 of his own men, who were joined by 1,500 Irish, marched westward, and on the 28th attacked and defeated General Lake, who had 6,000 men under his command, at Castlebar. The rout of the British troops was so precipitate that the Races of Castlebar became a byeword from that day in Connaught. It was not until September 8th that Lord Cornwallis at the head of 30,000 troops ventured to face the audacious Frenchman at Ballinamuck, who, when he surrendered, had only

842 officers and men under his command. Twelve days afterwards the French despatched one man-of-war with eight frigates and 3,000 men to succour Humbert. On October 10th the little squadron reached Lough Swilly, only to find itself face to face with a superior British squadron. It was a case of *sauve qui peut*. The *Hoche*, which had Wolfe Tone on board, fought desperately against four sail of the line and one frigate, but was compelled to surrender.

It was the last death-throe of the rebellion. Lord Castlereagh had triumphed. All that remained to do was to keep the hangman busy, complete the process of terrorism, and garner the spoils. Of these, the chief was the destruction of the Irish Parliament and the passing of the Act of Union with Britain, which for a hundred years has remained as the memorable monument of the most absolutely incredible series of crimes ever perpetrated by one nominally Christian nation upon another.

The military force in Ireland, during and immediately after the insurrection, was:—

The Regulars	32,281
The Militia	26,634
The Yeomanry	51,274
The English Militia	24,201
Artillery	1,500
Commissariat	1,700
Total	137.590

Lord Castlereagh did not think he had a single man too many even then.*

VIII.—THE FIRST-FRUITS OF THE CRIME.

As to how many perished in 1798, authorities, as usual, differ. The estimates vary from a minimum direct loss of life of 15,000

* This also has been disputed. I am angrily informed that only 90,500 men were under arms in the autumn of 1798. Possibly. But the figures quoted above do not refer solely to the autumn.

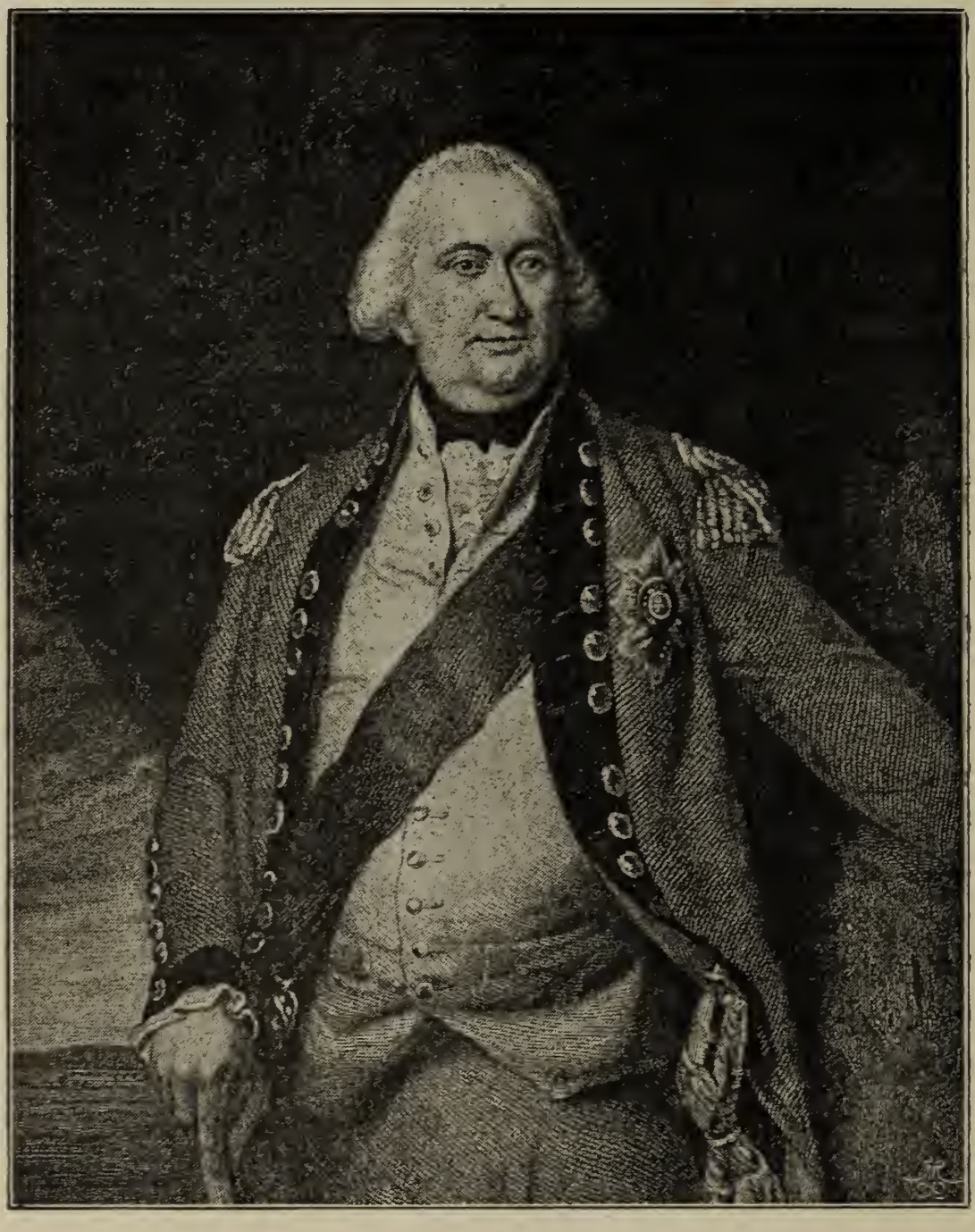
persons to 70,000. In both cases these estimates are limited to those who fell in the field or were executed. Even suppose the minimum estimate were accepted as most in accordance with the facts, we have a frightful butcher's bill to put down to the credit of those who deliberately provoked the insurrection. Mr. Lecky, in his "Ireland in the Eighteenth Century," repels the charge brought against the British Government, that they provoked the rebellion in order to bring about the Union. It is unnecessary to go so far as this in order to saddle the Government of the day with the responsibility of the rebellion. Mr. Lecky himself, although he denies that the rebellion was provoked in order to carry the Act of Union, admits that the conspiracy was forced into a premature explosion by the establishment of martial law. He quotes also from a perfectly loyal writer, one of the most temperate and most competent then living in Ireland, that "to declare that the Government of Ireland facilitated the growth of rebellion for the purpose of effecting the Union would be to hold language not perhaps sufficiently warranted by facts. But to affirm that the rebellion was kept alive for that purpose seems perfectly warrantable." Certainly if it had not been for the rebellion, which was, as we have seen, the handiwork of the Government, there would have been no chance of carrying the Union.

Sir John Moore was employed in the suppression of the rebellion. He has left on record his opinion that there was no need for all this severity:—

> Moderate treatment by the generals, and the preventing of the troops from pillaging and molesting the people, would soon restore tranquillity, and the latter would certainly be quiet if the gentry and yeomen would only behave with tolerable decency, and not seek to gratify their ill-humour and revenge upon the poor.

After the insurrection had been practically suppressed Lord Cornwallis became Viceroy of Ireland. He was horrified at the state of things which he found existing. We have in his correspondence with Major-General Ross and the Duke of Portland a confirmation of all that has been printed above. He says, for instance:—

On my arrival in this country I put a stop to the burning of houses and murder of the inhabitants by the yeomen, or any other persons who delighted in that amusement; to the flogging for the purpose of extorting confession; and to the free-quarters, which comprehend UNIVERSAL RAPE AND ROBBERY THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE COUNTRY.



LORD CORNWALLIS.

(Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1798.)

"Universal rape and robbery throughout the whole country!" What could be more emphatic? How, indeed, could it be otherwise? when we read Lord Cornwallis's own account of the

instruments with which the administration of the country was carried on :—

The Irish militia are totally without discipline, contemptible before the enemy when any serious resistance is made to them, but ferocious and cruel in the extreme when any poor wretches, either with or without arms, come within their power; in short, murder appears to be their favourite pastime.

In July he wrote to Major-General Ross to say that there was no law either in town or country but martial law conducted by Irishmen heated with passion and revenge :—

But all this is trifling compared to the numberless murders that are hourly committed by our people without any process or examination whatever. The yeomanry are in the style of the loyalists in America, only much more numerous and powerful, and a thousand times more ferocious. These men have saved the country; but they now take the lead in rapine and murder. The Irish militia, with few officers, and those chiefly of the worst kind, follow closely on the heels of the yeomanry in murder and every kind of atrocity, and the fencibles take a share, although much behind-hand, with the others.

The gentry were as bad as the militia :—

The conversation of the principal persons of the country all tends to encourage this system of blood; and the conversation, even at my table, where you will suppose I do all I can to prevent it, always turns on hanging, shooting, burning, &c.; and if a priest has been put to death, the greatest joy is expressed by the whole company.

In the midst of all this orgy of Hell there shines out one bright gleam, and only one. During all the terrible times of reprisal and slaughter, when every conceivable crime was committed by the British and many heinous crimes were committed by the Irish, it is universally admitted that the Irish displayed, in one respect, a virtue which is thrown into all the more conspicuous relief by the total absence of any trace of it on the other side.

The Rebellion was, as I have shown, the mere maddened welter of a peasantry deliberately driven frantic by the wholesale violation of their wives and daughters, these outrages being set on foot by the Government for this very purpose. Its suppression was accompanied by excesses which might have brought the blush to the cheek of a Turk or a Kurd. But, notwithstanding all this, the Irish insurgents, in their brief hour of triumph, although they slew and burnt and administered the stern law of

lex talionis with scant mercy, never laid a foul hand upon a woman. Amid all these atrocities, says Mr. H. Maxwell, "horrible and revolting as their cruelties were, the chastity of the fair sex was respected." "I have not been able to ascertain," says Gordon, "one instance to the contrary in the county of Wexford, though many beautiful young women were absolutely in their power."

To what purpose, it may be asked, do we "remember 1798"? It is an old story—a hundred years old. What has it to do with us to-day? The inquiry reminds us of the protest of the spendthrift, who protested against being sued for a debt which was really so long overdue that it ought to be written off. A hundred years ago is but as yesterday in the history of nations; and although a century has elapsed, Ireland is united to England to-day by virtue of the crimes at which I have briefly glanced. So far as Ireland is concerned, we stand in the felon's dock of history, not sit on the judgment seat.

PART II.

WHAT DOES JOHN BULL OWE TO IRELAND?

DEBT DUE.—*Before the Union.*

I should do a great injustice to myself, which would be a small matter, but it would be an injustice to my cause, which is a big matter, if I for a moment suggested that I do not think that Ireland is a proper subject for generous financial treatment. My right hon. friend has reminded me that, at Alnwick some years ago, I stated that the English treatment of Ireland, long before the Union, long before this alleged injustice under the Union arose, and when the two countries were legislatively separate, was so scandalously selfish that some reparation might well be thought due to her from this country. I think so still. I think that the treatment of Ireland by England, by successive English Whig Governments, by successive Whig Governments of the last century, in the interest of English manufacturers, is a very dark blot on our Parliamentary history. I do not shrink from any conclusion that may legitimately be drawn for that, but it has no relation to the Union or the grievances in this case. I have always held, and I still hold, that Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom, which for historic reasons, and because of its present depression—a depression not due, I believe, to English legislation now—is a special subject for British generosity and benevolence.—MR. ARTHUR BALFOUR, *House of Commons, July 5th*, 1898.

Since the Union.

What, in plain, homely, and unmistakable language, was the grievance of which Ireland complained, and which had been proved on incontrovertible authority by the Royal Commission? First of all, let the House remember the Royal Commission was a body which consisted of a British majority. Let it bear in mind also that it contained admittedly eminent financiers, such as the late Mr. Childers, Mr. Currie, Lord Welby, Lord Farrer, Sir R. Hamilton, and others. Let the House bear in mind that the Commission came to its decision on the evidence of the officials of the British Treasury, and that, after deliberating for two years, the Commission reported with practical unanimity that "the actual taxed revenue of Ireland is about 1-11th that of Great Britain, while the relative taxable capacity of Ireland is very much smaller, and is not estimated by any of us to exceed 1-20th." That, translated into figures, meant that Ireland was overtaxed as compared with Great Britain to the extent of nearly three millions a year; or, put in another way, that for every £100 of Ireland's taxable capacity Ireland had been forced to pay nearly £9, whereas, if she were taxed on the same principle as Great Britain, she would only be called upon to pay £5. With one exception, every British member of the Commission agreed to that report.—MR. J. REDMOND, *House of Commons, July 4th*, 1898.

HOW much does John Bull owe to Ireland? Not a brass farthing, says Mr. Doughty, M.P. "We have paid her in full. And the Irish demand for more so disgusts me that I repudiate Home Rule and fling in my lot with Mr. Chamberlain." Hence the vacancy for Grimsby, and a small storm in a teacup which perturbed the Liberal ranks during midsummer. It was not a storm in a teacup either. For although Mr. Doughty is insignificant enough in himself, his action raises a great question. For at bottom the issue is this: Whether John Bull has or has not any sense of justice left in his soul? If he has not—and if Mr. Doughty be a fair specimen, there is not much left—then indeed are we a nation nigh unto cursing. Mr. Doughty and the men of his stamp approach the Irish question from any and every point but that of justice. They ask themselves not what is just and fair between two partners, but what is most convenient and expedient for ourselves. They forget that the way of transgressors is hard. Honesty is the best policy for men and for nations; and little as Mr. Doughty may credit it, the absconding debtor who bilks his creditor does not in the long run come off so well as the man who pays twenty shillings in the pound.

Possibly Mr. Doughty imagines that John Bull has paid his debt to Ireland. Ignorance, sheer ignorance, may account for much. The editor of the *Blackburn Standard* evidently labours under the delusion that we owe Ireland nothing. The article I published on "The Centenary of 1798" provoked him to say many things, among others, that I wrote in a literary style so vigorous as to arouse in the reader a consuming desire to kick me. It is a very pretty compliment, and we will let it pass. But my Blackburn *confrère* complains that I do wrong to recall the memory of the horror of 1798. It was such a long time ago, and England has long since paid her debt. Quoting my allusion to the spendthrift who protested against being sued for a debt which was really so long overdue that it ought to be written off, the *Blackburn Standard* says:—

If the spendthrift was reformed, and had been for years regularly paying off large instalments of the debt, with interest, until he had repaid a sum very much larger than the amount originally borrowed, he would be entitled to ask for a receipt in full, and no judge would be disposed to give the benefit of the law to the money-lender who declined to give him a release. England stands in pretty much this relationship to Ireland now. She doubtless owed the Sister Isle expiation for many wrongs; but she has been studiously trying, year after year, to atone for them, and it is somewhat ungenerous to keep their memory green by such celebrations as those of '98. No one would desire to blot out any pages of history from which the present generation may derive both instruction and warning. But no good object is to be served by the encouragement of intransigency, by commemorating events of which all concerned have occasion to be not proud, but ashamed.

Now there we have stated plump and plain the justification for my reminding the British public of the unspeakable crimes to which we owe the Act of Union. For the fact is that we have not paid off our debt, let alone with interest. The balance is indeed very heavily against us, and, that being the case, it is nonsense to talk about the want of generosity shown in referring to the circumstances in which that debt was originally incurred. But what then of the "measures passed every session," and so forth? To which I reply—If a man owes me a thousand pounds, does it diminish my just irritation at being kept out of my money because he compels me to stand all day outside his door in the rain before I can compel him even to pay me a sixpence on account? What would we think of such a debtor if, on presenting our claim for the balance of £997 16s. 9d., he were to turn upon us indignantly and say, "How mean and ungenerous of you to remind me of that old loan! Why, there has hardly a day passed all these years that I have not been paying you instalments on account! And yesterday I paid you not only one sixpence, but even a whole half-crown. It is really too bad." Yet if such a debtor were to use such language to his creditor, he would not be one whit more insolent and nonsensical than are those Englishmen who profess to be outraged by the persistent pertinacity of the Irish in pressing for the balance that is their due.

But is there any balance due? That, of course, is the question of questions. It is not a matter to be settled by assertions. Let us go to the law and to the testimony. At the head of this

article I have printed two statements made by unimpeachable authorities as to what John Bull's debt to Ireland has been before and since the Union. Mr. Balfour certifies with welcome emphasis that before the horrors of 1798, and their corollary in the Act of Union, England owed Ireland a heavy debt for the destruction of her manufactures, for which it is John Bull's duty to make atonement even now. That is to say, the old debt prior to 1798 is not yet discharged. John Bull owes Ireland an unpaid balance on that score to this day. How much Mr. Balfour does not say. It is enough for our present purpose to know that he admits without reserve the existence of an unpaid debt dating back to the days prior to the Union. What I am now concerned with is the debt that we have accumulated since the Union. Upon that point we have witnesses even more unimpeachable than Mr. Balfour in the Royal Commissioners who were appointed to inquire into the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and who reported that, in round numbers, the predominant partner was taxing the poorer and weaker member of the firm no less a sum than £2,750,000 per annum over and above what was just. How long this has been going on is not distinctly stated. But it is probable that the annual drain of excess taxation has been kept up steadily since the Crimean war. That is to say, John Bull, instead of repaying his old debt —vouched for by Mr. Balfour—has been beggaring his Irish neighbour by exacting an annual tribute of nearly three millions sterling. This exaction is not only still kept up, it has been increased since the Commission reported, Mr. J. Redmond calculated, by an annual sum of £600,000. Be that as it may, the debate on the Financial Relations of the two countries, which took place in the House of Commons on July 4th and 5th, brought the salient facts of the case so plainly before the public that there was in reality no alternative but either to pay up or to repudiate the debt. Mr. Doughty chose the latter alternative. But the conscience of England forbids any such attempt to cheat a weaker partner.

If the conscience of England were to be deaf to the appeals of justice when urged by Ireland, it is possible that it will be stirred

up by reflecting not so much upon the judgment of the civilized world as upon the judgment of the American Republic. Let no one protest against the suggestion as one dishonouring to our national pride. Even the *Quarterly Review*—that staunch advocate of Old Toryism—was last month constrained to admit that as the result of closer relations between John Bull and Uncle Sam, more concessions would have to be made to Ireland. Mr. Beckett, the Conservative member for Whitby, referred in the debate of July 5th to the bearing of this question upon our relations with the United States in very significant terms :—

> There was one thing that every Englishman looked to with satisfaction, the increasing amity with America. There was one thing that stood in the way of friendship with America being consummated, and that was the action of the Irish people in America. A vast number of Americans thought that England had not treated Ireland with justice. If they took this opportunity of turning a willing ear to this demand, simply because they thought it was a just demand, that attitude would impress America very greatly to lend an ear to England.

Wherever we turn we shall find the pressure of American opinion constraining us to reconsider our position and view questions from the American standpoint. This is pure gain for the cause of justice, and pure gain for Ireland. But it is death to all the ignorant, dishonest, arrogant talk of men of the school of the Doughtys.

I.—IRELAND'S LITTLE BILL.

When I was in Ireland I read in the Irish papers a full report of a very remarkable meeting of Irishmen held in London in the neighbourhood of Charing Cross. The London papers appear to have missed its significance. But it seemed to me, reading the report of the speeches in full, as if it were one of the most important and significant meetings held for years past. It was a meeting presided over by Lord Castletown, and addressed by Lord Mayo, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, M.P., Mr. Vesey Knox, M.P., and Mr. Horace Plunkett, and its object was to arraign the injustice

with which Ireland was treated by the predominant partner in matters of taxation. There was a definite charge made by every speaker that justice was not done, and appeal was constantly made to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations of the two countries.

Reduced to round numbers, that Commission reported that Ireland is at present paying into the Imperial Exchequer a sum of £2,750,000 in excess of what, under the Act of Union, she is called upon to pay. This year the Government has granted

From the *Westminster Gazette.*] [July 7th.

JOHN BULL'S FINANCIAL RELATIONS.

about £700,000 per annum to the relief of local taxation in connection with the new Local Government Bill, leaving a balance of £2,000,000 still to the bad. Lord Castletown, an Irish peer, landlord and Unionist, did not scruple to declare that every day that passed the life-blood of Ireland was being drained from her. He followed up that statement by an impassioned appeal to all his countrymen to sink their differences and form a great National League, with branches in every county and agents in every constituency, whose one sole aim and object should be the rescue of these £2,000,000.

Is another National League in sight? It will not be necessary to form an amateur organization. Her Majesty's Ministers have been all this session busily engaged in providing the organization that Lord Castletown desires. The new County and District Councils in Ireland will no sooner come into existence under the Local Government Act, than they will each and all, with one consent, become so many local branches of the League for arresting the excessive taxation of Ireland by her predominant partner.* There is nothing to prevent the various councils appointing representatives to a national convention whose duty it will be to see that the financial relations of the two countries are adjusted in accordance with the principles laid down in the Act of Union. There will be here the germ of a national Parliament, the beginning of Home Rule. But whether that convention meets next year, or whether it is postponed till the twentieth century, the motive power behind the agitation, the lever which will enable it to attain its ends, will be the consciousness of the constant unspoken appeal from Westminster to Washington, from John Bull to Uncle Sam.

The debate in the House of Commons on Mr. Redmond's amendment on July 5th and 6th was not a very satisfactory performance. Mr. Balfour, as a shrewd journalistic friend of mine remarked, simply made hay and obscured the facts by words without importance—excepting so far as they obscured the issue. Sir M. Hicks-Beach was stolid and obstinate as usual, while Sir

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* Even the moribund Grand Juries have moved in this direction. Read, for instance, the resolution passed *nem. con.* by a Cork Grand Jury, July 14th, 1898:—"The Grand Jury of the county of Cork desires to record its regret that her Majesty's Government has again declined to recognize in the excessive taxation of Ireland a real and a remediable cause of Irish poverty and discontent. The amount of revenue collected by indirect taxation from the very poorest families in Ireland amounts in many districts to much more than the rents paid in those districts, and this being the case, we respectfully protest against the growing tendency of legislation to afford relief always at the cost of one class or another within Ireland, but never at the cost of the British Treasury. We believe that so long as the sum amounting in many instances to fully one-fifth of the yearly income of the very poorest families in Ireland is absorbed by the revenue tax on tea, tobacco, and whisky, there can be no improvement in the condition of that class whose extreme poverty must ever be the fruitful parent of discontent."

W. Harcourt rode off on a false scent. Nevertheless, certain facts and figures were brought out very clearly which will have to be taken into account by whatever political accountant attempts to strike a balance between John Bull and his Irish partner.

The finding of the Royal Commission as to the excessive taxation of Ireland could not be denied. It was therefore asserted that it was beside the question to treat Ireland as a fiscal entity. Not even so much of her national existence will be recognized by the Unionist Government, which, indeed, has very solid reasons for ignoring it. It is money into their pocket to ignore it, and there are very few entities which Administrations would not be ready to ignore for three million golden sovereigns per annum. The fact is, they cannot see the entity for the gold. But, as Mr. J. Redmond pointed out—

> Ireland's right to separate financial treatment did not merely rest on the declarations and pledges of Pitt and Castlereagh at the time of the Union, but it was known that every speech they made in support of the Union contained explicit declarations and pledges from them on that point. Ireland's right to separate financial treatment rested on the express declarations and enactments of the Treaty of Union and the Acts which carried it out. The seventh article of the Treaty of Union was on this point clear and explicit. It stated that Ireland and Great Britain entered into legislative partnership on the clear understanding that they were still for the purposes of taxation to be regarded as separate and distinct financial units. Ireland was to contribute to the Imperial expenditure in proportion to her resources, so far as the same could be ascertained, and even with the imposition of indiscriminate taxation, if circumstances permitted its adoption, she might claim special exemptions and abatements. As long as that article of the Treaty of Union was in existence, so long it was an ignorant and futile answer to their demand to say that Ireland was not entitled to separate financial treatment.

Sir Edward Clarke is a Unionist and a Conservative, but he was compelled to admit the justice of the Irish claim. He said:—

> This country was under an obligation and covenant towards Ireland. England had come into this union of Parliaments by covenant and agreement with the Parliament of Ireland itself, and under the Act of Union and the Act of 1817 the rule for dealing with Ireland was distinctly laid down. We were left in no uncertainty as to the views of Pitt and Castlereagh, who wrote their opinion into the statute of which they were the authors, and when in 1817 the two Exchequers were made one and a common fiscal system was established, it was recognized, carrying out the pledges of those who brought about the Union, that there must be exemptions and abatements, if necessary, in order to adjust the fiscal burden of the weaker member of the partnership. The obligation was still upon us

and if there could be a case made out on the part of Ireland which showed that she had been taxed beyond the capacity of her people, hon. members had no right to consider what it would cost to their constituencies or to themselves to pay the debt. It was written not only in the obligation of conscience, but in the letter of the Act.

Yet notwithstanding this, the readjustment of the fiscal burden has been made not by way of relieving, but by way of increasing the taxation cast upon Ireland. In proof of this we have the verdict of the Royal Commission that she is taxed £2,750,000 in excess of what is in accord either with her capacity, justice, or the covenant of the Act of Union.

Apart from mere juggling with the figures departmental fashion, and sophistical demonstrations, first that Ireland paid less than her fair proportion to the cost of running the Empire; and, secondly, that she paid nothing at all, but had to be subsidized to be kept going, the only real argument against doing anything special for Ireland is that the grievance from which she suffers is common to all the distressed districts in Great Britain. That may be true; and, if true, it is another illustration of the immense service which the Irish have frequently rendered to the British democracy. If the poor of this country are taxed at the rate of one-sixteenth, whereas they ought not to be taxed at more than one-twentieth, that is a very serious grievance—a debt due from the rich to the poor, which the poor will do well to collect without loss of time. But Ireland leads the way. As Sir E. Clarke said, this country cannot refuse to perform her covenanted obligations to Ireland merely because there are others in her own household who deserve sympathy. Fortunately on this subject the Irish are practically unanimous. They have only to remain so to compel the recognition of the justice of their claims.

The case of Ireland is so overwhelmingly strong that we wonder how any one can contemplate sending it before a judge or arbitrator without a shudder. Look at it for a moment, starting from the year 1798, when the suppression of a rebellion, forced into existence by torture and rape, resulted in the legislative union of the two countries.

The solid argument, the clinching justification, which was

always insisted upon by the makers of the Union, was that by uniting Ireland with the wealthier island prosperity would follow and Irish poverty would disappear. What the Union was guaranteed to remedy by its author, Mr. Pitt, was Ireland's want of industry and of capital. "How were those wants to be supplied but by blending more closely with Ireland the industry and capital of Great Britain?" The answer to that question surely was that the supply of Ireland's wants in that respect depends less upon the blend than upon the subsequent dividend between the partners. But without pressing that point, it cannot be denied that the Union has failed in realizing the promises of its promoters.

To begin with, we saddled Ireland with the sum of £20,000,000 odd spent in promoting and suppressing the rebellion and afterwards in bribery and corruption among the Irish members in order to buy the extinction of the Irish Parliament.

Leaving that on one side, let us see how the two partners have fared:—

	Great Britain.	Ireland.
The population at the time of the Union was	11,000,000	5,000,000
The average taxation per head was	£3 4s.	10s.

After a hundred years—

	Great Britain.	Ireland.
The population to-day is	35,000,000	4,500,000
The average taxation per head is	£2 5s.	£1 15s. 10d.

Confine the comparison to the figures at the beginning and the end of the Queen's reign and the result is much the same:—

	Great Britain.	Ireland.
Population, 1837	17,000,000	8,000,000
Taxation per head	£2 7s.	12s. 11d.
Population, 1897	35,000,000	4,500,000
Taxation per head	£2 5s.	£1 15s.

As Sir Edward Clarke remarked:—

The Irish grievance was that, with the population decreasing in number and decreasing in industrial capacity, there had been an actual, a constant, a larger, and, he would venture to add, an excessive increase in the taxation of the people of that country, and no comparison of figures could get rid of that fact.

The grim significance of the increase of taxation under English rule is brought into stronger relief by the efforts which are made

to explain it away. It is, for instance, said sometimes, "Oh, we admit that the taxation per head is now four times as great as it was at the time of the Union, but although the taxation has quadrupled, the taxable wealth of Ireland has more than quadrupled." Alas! this is an assertion that is not justified by the facts. The taxable wealth of Ireland has by no means quadrupled since the Union. It is the taxable wealth of England that has quadrupled; but since the Union, although the wealth of England has been multiplied four times, the taxation per head has actually been reduced. Whereas in Ireland, where the taxable wealth of the country has hardly increased at all, the taxation per head has been quadrupled. The predominant partner must admit that such a showing as the net result of a hundred years' partnership is hardly calculated to impress an impartial arbitrator with a sense of the fairness with which the minority stockholder has been treated.

The only answer, if it be an answer, which is no answer, to the complaint of the Irish taxpayer is to be found in Mr. Balfour's extraordinary paradoxical speech in the debate on the financial relations. In that speech Mr. Balfour, by the aid of some figures put together for him by the officials of the Treasury, succeeded in demonstrating to his own satisfaction that Ireland was practically subsidized by the English taxpayer. "Ireland then," exclaimed Mr. Healy, "is a bad debt?"—a proposition to which Mr. Balfour assented.*

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* The passages in Mr. Balfour's speech to which I refer are as follows:—"Supposing your principles were carried out, what would be the fiscal result? I am bound to say I think the fiscal result is very interesting. The Commission found that Ireland ought only to have raised in taxation one-twenty-first of the total amount of taxation of the United Kingdom. The actual cost of Irish government, diminished by half of the constabulary vote, diminished by a third of the law charges, diminished by the whole of the Lord Lieutenant's vote—the cost of Irish government diminished by all those items, if Ireland only contributed one-twenty-first of the total tax revenue, would still leave Ireland as a dead charge upon the English and Scottish Exchequer of £500,000 a year. Let me put the matter in another way. If Ireland did not contribute a shilling to the Army, nor a shilling to the Navy, nor a shilling to the Diplomatic services, nor a shilling to any general Imperial matter whatever, and if her local expenditure were diminished by all the items which I have described, even then Ireland, if she only paid that one-twentieth of the total expenditure of the United Kingdom, would be a dead charge upon the Imperial Exchequer of half a million

From a purely financial point of view Mr. Balfour maintained it would be an economy to cut Ireland adrift. Ireland, if Mr. Balfour be right, is a nation which can only be kept out of bankruptcy by being constantly subsidized by the predominant partner. If this be the case, all that need be said is that the Royal Commissioners ought to have found it out. It is so easy to juggle with figures that until the accuracy of Mr. Balfour's figures is attested by an authority as weighty as that of the Financial Relations Commission, the British and American public will take little stock in his demonstration. The finding of the

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a year. . . . . The theory is that Ireland's taxation ought to be one-twenty-first of that of the United Kingdom. If that is worked out according to the most recent figures the income of a separate and independent Ireland would be £5,614,000 in round numbers. The expenditure of Ireland, after having the cost of half the police, the whole of the cost of the Lord Lieutenancy, and one-third of the law charges deducted, would be £5,970,000. So that on merely the cost of local government in Ireland there would be a deficit in this independent Ireland of not less than £362,000 a year. And, mark you, this Ireland would spend not a shilling on an army to preserve order and protect its shores; not a shilling on a navy to defend its integrity; not a shilling on its Diplomatic service; nothing to support its flag among the nations of the world; it would have not a single halfpenny to spend on any of those extraneous services which the smallest Republic in Central or South America is obliged to spend; neither would Ireland pay a penny of the interest on the national debt."

The exact figures of such revenue and expenditure are as follows:—

REVENUE.			EXPENDITURE.		
——	1893—1894.	1896—1897.	——	1893—1894.	1896—1897.
Income Tax...	£653,417	£682,000	Law & Police	£2,162,138	£2,192,500
Death Duties	473,927	718,000	Dublin Castle	862,438	878,500
Stamps... ...	*248,600*	296,000	Education ...	1,141,966	1,356,000
Tea, &c. ...	581,062	615,000	Local Grants	643,203	720,000
Tobacco ...	1,174,642	1,227,000	Post Office ...	792,810	823,000
Alcohol ...	*3,512,071*	3,631,000	Imperial Contribution ...	1,966,094	2,176,000
Non Tax ...	134,828	132,000	...	...	...
Post Office ...	752,293	809,000	...	...	...
Crown Lands	37,809	36,000			
	£7,568,649	£8,146,000		£7,568,649	£8,146,000

Royal Commission that Ireland is overtaxed by £2,750,000 per annum is good enough for us.

It is unnecessary to enter at length into the way in which Ireland was saddled with the income tax and the increased whisky duty under a plausible pretence of a generous cancelling of financial obligation. Mr. Gladstone's generosity in this case was something like that of a usurer who cancels an old debt of £100 in consideration of an annual payment for ever of twice that amount.

The protest against the excessive taxation of Ireland has been intermittent but continuous (see Mr. Thomas Kennedy's "History of the Irish Protest against Overtaxation since 1853"). Those who desire to master the intricacies of the fiscal iniquity should communicate with the Irish Financial Reform League, which meets at the central office of the All Ireland Committee, 19, Lincoln Place, Dublin. Mr. A. Keogh Noran is General Secretary for Ireland.

A few figures quoted from the pamphlet, "The Irish Budget of 1897," may be of interest. Of direct taxes Ireland pays £1,696,000, of indirect £5,473,000. In Great Britain indirect taxation is 48 per cent. of the total revenue, in Ireland it is 74 per cent. In Ireland every family on an average pays 14s. in tea duty. The Irish average consumption of tea is 7 pounds per annum, against $5\frac{3}{4}$ pounds in Great Britain. The average duty on tobacco paid by each family in Ireland is 30s.; on whisky 77s. 6d. Every Irish family, therefore, pays on an average £6 sterling per annum to the Government duty on tea, tobacco, and whisky.

The poor tenants in the congested districts who complain that they are rackrented because they pay 30s. a year for the rent of the lands from which they raise their food, pay from £4 to £5 in indirect taxation to the Government, which makes no abatements and never gets shot.

Since the Royal Commission reported, the revenue for Ireland has been increased by £600,000, owing to new burdens and improved methods of taxation. The dog tax, which is 7s. 6d. in England, is only half-a-crown in Ireland, a curious and rare

instance of the poorer country being favoured in taxation by the Legislature.

In 1892-3 the cost of civil government in Belgium was £2,600,000, or 10s. per head, whereas the figures in Ireland were £4,544,000, or 19s. 7d. per head.

II.—JOHN BULL BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT.

Suppose that John Bull were haled before the judgment seat of Rhadamanthus and asked to explain how it is that the poor partner has become poorer and the rich partner richer, and how it is that in Ireland alone among the provinces of the British Empire the population dwindles and disappears, what would he reply?

Let us look at the matter calmly. Spain has been adjudged to have forfeited her rights over Cuba by long continued misgovernment. But do not let us forget that while the Cubans in the last half-century have doubled their numbers, despite all the oppression of Spain, the population of Ireland has steadily dwindled until her ten millions have shrunk to less than five. It is of course easy to say that this is due to economic causes over which England has no control. But economic causes is only a polite way of describing want of cash. The depopulation of Ireland is due to the poverty of Ireland.

Suppose that Rhadamanthus were to reply to our protest that the depopulation of Ireland was due to economic causes over which we had no control, by asking leave to subject the financial relations between the two countries to an impartial and exhaustive audit. We are the predominant partner, no doubt. We have kept the books, and we have insisted upon making the calls and declaring the dividends. This has gone on for a hundred years. During all that time the predominant partner has got richer and richer, while the other one has dwindled and starved. In

ordinary partnerships such a result would excite suspicion and would demand enquiry. Dare John Bull face such an examination of his books?

Judging by the result of the examination made by a Royal Commission of his own appointment, John Bull would fare somewhat badly at the hands of Rhadamanthus. £2,750,000 a year is equal to a capital sum of at least £70,000,000, or say £15 per head for every man, woman, and child in the country. Clearly if we are taking this money unjustly, we cannot possibly pretend that we have no hand in the economic causes which have depopulated Ireland! It is rather to be feared that Rhadamanthus would be inclined to declare that the *causa causans* of the economic causes was John Bull's vampire-like drain of Ireland's life-blood.

I may be told that Rhadamanthus is a myth—that John Bull is master in his own house and in the Irishman's also, *Sic volo, sic jubeo*. Who is there to make him afraid? To this I reply that "Conscience doth make cowards of us all"; and if it be the case, as it certainly appears to be, that John Bull has been swindling his Irish partner, then we have very good reason to be afraid:—

> Ain't your bonds held by Fate, John,
> Like all the world's besides?
> Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
> Wise men forgive," sez he,
> But not forgit; an' sometime yet
> Thet truth may strike J. B.
> Ez wal ez you an' me.

Lowell's "Jonathan to John" reminds us of the fact that at last there is in the world a possible Court of Appeal to which the Irish can carry their grievances with a fair chance of being heard.

The more nearly Britain and America come together, the more potent the influence which the Irish will exert over the policy of Great Britain. They may be the wedding-ring of the English-speaking race, or they may forbid the banns. At present their instinct is to do the latter, but when they realize the pull they will have over the Anglo-American Alliance by their influence on the new predominant partner, they will change their tack.

If 1798 is a thing of the past, the fruits of 1798 are still with us. The Union of Great Britain and Ireland is the first of these. The second is the disunion of the English-speaking race all round the world. It is this latter baleful consequence of the crime of Pitt and Castlereagh which most interests us to-day. We have heard a great deal of late, and we shall, I hope, hear still more, about the Reunion of the English-speaking people. But I came back from Ireland more than ever convinced that this will for ever be little more than a gaudy dream, unless we make the Alliance pivot on the reconciliation of Ireland. And nothing impressed me more with the essential lack of prescience and of political intuition among our public men than the attitude of Mr. Chamberlain on the one hand, and of Mr. Michael Davitt on the other. From the high-flying Unionist standpoint nothing can be more mischievous than this talk of alliance with the United States. While from the Irish point of view, nothing can be more fatuous than to oppose an alliance in which the Republic, based on the principle of Home Rule and largely influenced by the Irish vote, would be the predominating partner. But such is the perversity of human, and especially of Irish, affairs, that each of these able and resolute men is contending strenuously for the cause to which he is passionately opposed.

Mr. Chamberlain told Mr. Morley in the House of Commons that the Irish vote counted for little in American politics. When Mr. Chamberlain can find a single notable American politican who has never expressed his sympathy with Home Rule for Ireland, he may expect us to believe him. The Irish vote counts in every election in every State in the Union. The English vote counts for nothing in any American election anywhere. Mr. Chamberlain will hardly deny that Mr. Croker, born in County Cork, counts for something in New York. There are smaller Mr. Crokers in every great city in the States. They and the Irish from whom they spring are, alike in American Union and British Colony, like salt in the mortar of the Temple of the English-speaking race. They are, and will be, as long as we persist in an attitude of uncompromising antagonism, an insuperable obstacle to any realization of the dream of a reunited people.

It is not without some significance that at the very moment when Mr. Chamberlain talks of a close fighting alliance with the United States, the President—who is waging war by sea and land to secure the liberation of an oppressed island—should be a McKinley of Antrim, one of whose family was hanged by the British soldiery in this very Rebellion of 1798. The grave of Francis McKinley, of Conagher, may still be seen at the deserted burial ground of Derry Keighan, Co. Antrim, with an inscription setting forth how he died for the cause of Ireland. That man who was hanged in Coleraine market-place after brief trial at drumhead court-martial was the uncle of William McKinley, now President of the United States. There are no longer any McKinleys of Conagher in Ireland. They have all crossed the Atlantic for the States.

Turn where you please in the United States and you will find the strain of Irish blood. Even Admiral Schley is Irish on his mother's side. In the army, in the navy, and, above all, in every department of the political world, the Irish swarm.

How are we going to have firm, close, friendly relations with these people if we do not heal the Irish feud, and how can we heal the Irish feud when we persist in picking the Irish pocket?

III.—IF UNCLE SAM CAME TO JUDGMENT.

Behind the natural and necessary increase of Irish influence that must result from any drawing together of the Empire and the Republic, it is necessary also to remember that, if the two English-speaking nations should be not friends, but foes, the Irish grievance might afford a hostile Government at Washington with exactly that pretext for intervention that would most commend itself to the moral sense of the American people. We are now face to face with a new America, an America flushed with victory, and exultant at having received the benediction of Providence on its liberating mission in Cuba. The appetite

grows while eating. The crusading genius, which delivered the West Indies from Spain, once roused is not likely to go to sleep.

For many years past the American politician confined his participation in the affairs of other nations to passing resolutions in Congress and in the various State Legislatures in favour of the oppressed Cubans and the oppressed Irish. At Madrid and in London men laughed and said that these resolutions were mere waste paper. But a time came when Uncle Sam got tired of passing resolutions about Cuba; he took down his sword and shouldered his rifle. With one blow the Spanish fleet disappeared from the Philippines, with another the navy of Spain vanished from American waters. A time may come when he may get tired of passing resolutions about the wrongs of Ireland. And then?

The habit of succouring oppressed and discontented islanders who are chafing against a foreign yoke began in Cuba. It spread at once to the Philippines. It may find a more congenial island for its manifestation nearer home.

The American Eagle is no longer confined to its cradling continent. A new naval power has been born into the world, and one which from its birth is disposed to regard its mission seriously as an avenger of the oppressed and a minister of the vengeance of Heaven.

If any reader imagines that this suggestion is fantastic, let him ask himself whether, if the crime of 1798 were to be perpetrated this year by a second Castlereagh, any power exists in this universe that would prevent the Americans interfering if only to suppress Pitch Caps and Free Quarters?

Further, let us ask in cold blood what we should have to say for ourselves if Uncle Sam, flushed with delight at the success with which he squared accounts with Spain in Cuba, were to be incited by his own strong moral sense and consciousness that he is the Chief Justice of God Almighty, to call John Bull to a reckoning for his dealings in Ireland? *

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* An Irish-American priest writes me as follows, Aug. 28th:—"I am equally surprised and delighted at your boldness and dash—yes, and grasp of so many side-bearings, more especially that of the manifest possibility of American inter-

Of course the bare suggestion makes one turn cold with anger. But just suppose, for the sake of argument only, that Uncle Sam were to frame an indictment against British Rule in Ireland, are we quite sure that we would be ready with a triumphant reply?

Remember, if you please, that although Ireland is nominally British, she is in heart American. We may resent this. But our resentment will not alter the facts. What we have to realize is that morally we have lost our hold upon Ireland. Politically, Ireland is part and parcel of the British Empire. She is garrisoned by our army, defended by our navy, and taxed by our Parliament to the tune of two and three-quarter millions per annum above what she ought legally to pay. So far as material force is concerned, we hold her handcuffed to our Imperial chariot. But the heart of her people is not with us. It is with the Republic beyond the Atlantic. Last June from Giant's Causeway to Killarney I did not come across an Irishman who had not friends and relatives in the United States. Everywhere the thought of the common people was busy, not with British or Imperial affairs, but with the war that was raging in the Spanish Main. It affected them far more closely than anything that was going on in Westminster. The whole petty fabric of domestic economy in a thousand homes was directly affected by the war. Passages had been given up. Remittances had been postponed. The Pactolean flood of American money was dried up. When would peace come? Were they likely to impress men for the war if it lasted? These are the real questions which interest the Irish people. Never was I so vividly reminded at every turn that Ireland is to all practical intents and purposes a moral dependency of the United States. Max O'Rell, I see, has just been telling his countrymen that the real capital of Ireland is New York. Certainly, New York, Chicago, Boston, and

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vention. Before my God I assert that as a fact; but that's not saying half as much as my knowledge (sheer personal experience of forty years, save one, in the United States at both sides of Mason and Dixon's Line) warrants me in believing, namely, that that intervention is not only possible, but probable, and that in the near future! I should like to give some startling reasons for this deep conviction, but have no time, as I am leaving to-morrow. As an Irishman I beg to express again our grateful thanks."

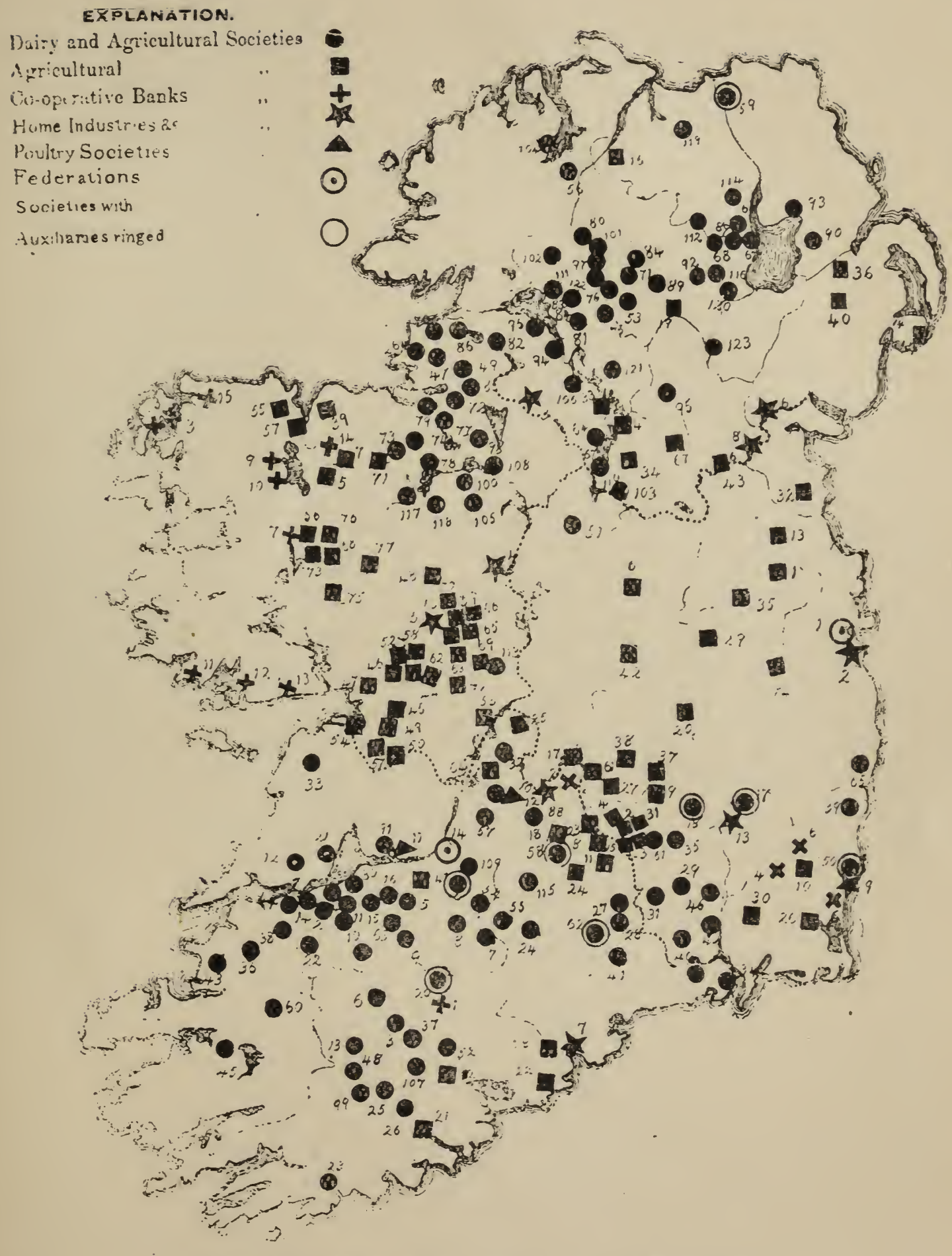
Philadelphia are far more vital centres of Irish national life than Dublin and Belfast, Cork and Limerick.

England has been a shrewish stepmother to the Irish race. The United States seems to them a kinder and a vaster Fatherland. Britain has taxed their poverty, whereas from America has come subsidies to the Irish poor to the tune of a million sterling a year. What wonder, then, that even the very circuses which cater for the pence of the Western peasant commend themselves, not as British, or Royal, or Imperial, or even as Irish, but find far the most attractive title is plain American?

IV.—THE MORAL OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

These are some of the reasons why we do well to remember 1798. It explains many things, and warns us of many pitfalls in the future which we shall do well to avoid betimes.

The lurid story of the hideous outrages committed on Irish women in 1798 by the British, while the Irish themselves did not, even in retaliation and in despair, lay a single foul hand upon the women of their foes, needs to be branded and burnt into the memory of the English race. If it haunted Mr. Doughty as it haunts me, there would have been no vacancy for Grimsby. Neither would there be anything but patience when we are confronted with the consequences of our own crimes. Such things are of the past, indeed, but they are the keys to the problem of the present. They explain, even if they do not justify, the hatred and distrust with which the Irish regard the English and their Government. Hatred is not a Christian virtue, but it is a product of the human heart for distilling which no policy could have been devised more apt than that which was pursued in 1798. And yet another reason for remembering '98 is because of the light, the lurid light, which it sheds upon the savage and intractable nature of the Orangemen of the North.



HOW IRISHMEN ARE HELPING THEMSELVES.

(From the Fourth Annual Report of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society.)

During my hurried visit to Ireland in June I drove through the seat of war in Belfast. It was curious to see the redcoats, with their rifles and bayonets, picketed in the side streets leading into Shankhill Road, the lair of the Orange ruffianism of Belfast. Their Catholic fellow-citizens had been on a procession through a purely Catholic district of the town to celebrate what Mr. Arnold Forster was not ashamed to speak of as a "bloody and cruel rebellion." The procession had no sooner dispersed than the Orange rowdies began a furious attack upon the police who had been protecting the procession, one hundred and three of whom received injuries more or less severe. Cavalry and infantry were hurried up, and the Unionist Administration and magistrates of Belfast were compelled to retain the Imperial troops day after day in the district of Shankhill Road in order to restrain the fanatical Orangemen from violence.

If Orangemen can need such restraint to-day, it is not difficult to understand the way in which they harried the unfortunate Catholics of Armagh in 1798. A hundred years does not seem to have done much towards civilizing the souls of these gentry, whose survival to the last decade of the nineteenth century serves a useful purpose, if only by enabling us to form some faint, far-away conception of what things were like when the method of Dublin Castle was to place the lives and liberties and property of Catholic Ireland under the heel of the progenitors of the heroes of Shankhill Road.

The Irish cause is looking up. The new Irish Local Government Bill will enable Irishmen to act together for the protection of their pockets. They at least are under no delusion as to there being no debt due from John Bull to Ireland.

The Government promise next year to re-introduce the Bill intended to promote a revival of agricultural prosperity in Ireland. What they have to do is to make provision for carrying out the recommendations of the Report of the Recess Committee. Already, as the accompanying map shows, private enterprise and the spread of the principle of co-operation have covered Ireland with creameries and co-operative societies.

"Heaven helps those who help themselves," and the least Government can do, in view of the Report of the Financial Relations Commission and the admissions of Mr. Balfour, is to provide at least a million sterling for use for the proper working of the Agricultural Department and the effective development of the local resources of this derelict farm.

It would be strictly within the compass of the duties of the new County Councils to associate themselves together to give weight and force to the representations of Ireland as to her right to claim liberal treatment from the British Exchequer. And when they have scored on the question of financial relations, they will have confidence to go on to consider the political relations of the two countries. Probably the next Home Rule Bill will come to us drafted by the Associated County Councils of Ireland. It will certainly have a much greater chance of success than any measure drafted by English and Scotch Ministers in London.

An Irishman wrote thus to me from Dublin on July 31st :—

You will do an immense service to the Irish and I believe also to the English people if you direct attention to the gravity of this question. There is very little doubt that the London Press, with very few exceptions, arranged last autumn and winter to boycott all reference to the movement going on in Ireland, and all correspondence on this matter. To adopt such an attitude is stupid and dangerous. There can be nothing more important than to meet the situation fairly. No one who knows what is going on in Ireland can shut his eyes to the fact that there is fast growing among the Anglo-Irish population a belief that England does not intend to be *honest* in money matters to Ireland, having regard to the attitude assumed chiefly by the English Press, which has not taken the trouble to understand the bearings of the Irish case and has completely ignored her rights under the Act of Union, but patronizingly talks of the "generosity and justice" of England. Meanwhile, the "English in Ireland" are recalling to mind their treatment in the eighteenth century, when their trade was ruined by prohibitions, and comparing it with this, in which, when it was finally annihilated, in three-fourths of Ireland, by Free Trade, the moment was in 1853 seized (in the teeth of their demand in Parliament for an enquiry under the Act of Union) to tax them two to three millions a year beyond their capacity as compared with England. Apart from all views entertained by the Nationalists in reference to England and any results they may have, nothing can be more dangerous for the English interest and the position of England among the nations than an appeal by the Anglo-Irish (as has been more than once suggested) to the judgment of other nations, on the ground that

England has denied them justice in money matters, and will not listen to their arguments. Such an appeal was actually suggested by the Rev. R. R. Kane, the Grand Master of the Belfast Orangemen, at the great 8th December 1897 meeting at the Dublin Mansion House, and is largely talked of. Excuse my writing to you at such length, but the growing feeling on this matter in Ireland has been kept back from the knowledge of the English people.

Before I left Dublin I visited Mr. Parnell's grave at Glasnevin. It brought vividly to my mind the curious prophecy which is

Westminster Gazette.]

A PASS TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

"Turn me out? Not likely! I've got a pass."

associated with his name. Nine years after the prophet Elijah had vanished from mortal sight, we read in the Old Book "there came a writing from the prophet Elijah." How the writing came we are not told. The message was one of warning and of prophecy

and of doom. In like manner in the year 1892, a year or more after Mr. Parnell's death, there came a writing from Charles Stewart Parnell, which also contained prophecies—all of which have been punctually fulfilled up to the present time; the last awaits fulfilment in due course.

The writing (I quote from memory, for it is some years since I was permitted to read it) ran thus :—

Mr. Gladstone will pass his Home Rule Bill through the Commons, but it will be of no avail, for it will be thrown out by the Lords.

At the General Election the Liberals will be beaten, and Lord Salisbury will be returned to office with a majority of 150.

After he has been three years in office he will bring in a Local Government Bill for Ireland, which will be as like Home Rule as he dares to make it. It will pass, but it will not satisfy the national aspirations of Ireland.

At the next General Election the Liberals will be returned to power, and they will make the Local Government Bill more like Home Rule.

There, if I remember aright, the message stopped. But so much has been fulfilled, including a more minute and particular prediction, that it is probable enough it may be right all through.

APPENDIX.

"THE MOST DAMNABLE INDICTMENT."

MY sketch of the Rebellion of 1798 in Part I. has provoked much animadversion and excited much enthusiasm. From two readers in Paris I have received a letter in which they ask me whether I can give any authority in support of what they say they regard as the most damnable indictment that could be brought against any Government.

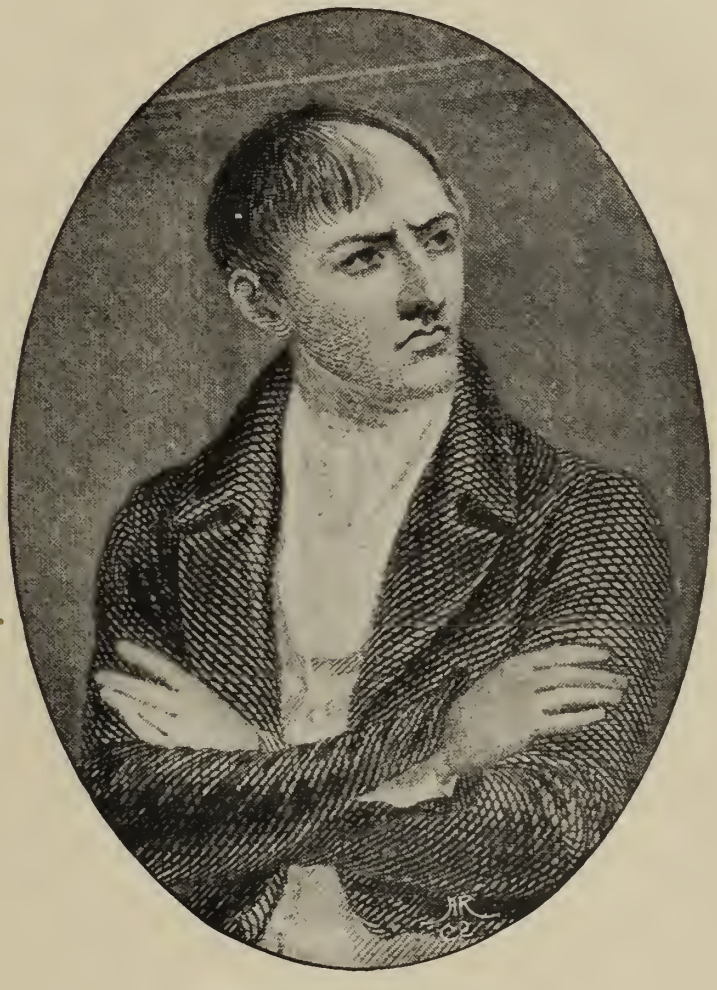
There is, unfortunately, no doubt about the facts. The proclamation enforcing free quarters was issued March 30th, 1798. The rebellion did not break out till May. Lord Castlereagh, so far from being ashamed of, took credit to the Government for the "measures taken by the Government to cause the premature explosion." Worse still, the Secret Committee which was appointed to report on the whole ghastly business actually approved of what was done. When the Committee was taking evidence in August, Emmett, M'Neven, and O'Connor, state prisoners, were brought as witnesses. In reply to the Lord Chancellor's question:—

"Pray, Mr. Emmett, what caused the late insurrection?" Mr. Emmett replied, "The free quarters, house-burnings, tortures, and the military executions in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow!" Messrs. M'Neven and O'Connor gave similar replies to the same query.

With this evidence before them, the Committee reported:—

That it appears, from a variety of evidence laid before your Committee, that the rebellion would not have broken out as soon as it did had it not been for the *well-timed measures* adopted by Government subsequent to the proclamation of the Lord-Lieutenant and Council bearing date 30th of March, 1798.

The "well-timed measures" were the quartering of a licentious soldiery upon the Irish population. It was not I, but Lord Cornwallis, England's Viceroy, who defined Free Quarters as Universal Rape. The phrase will be found in his Correspondence, vol. ii., pp. 357-69. A moment's reflection will convince any one



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that it could be nothing else. Mr. Lecky touches gingerly upon the subject, but he confirms the worst. Speaking of the "well-timed measures" applauded by the Committee, Mr. Lecky says:—

> The burnings of houses, which had been well known in the North, were now carried out upon a yet larger scale in Leinster, and the free quarters formed a new and terrible feature in the system of military coercion. . . . . If Abercrombie had continued in command, it is possible that the abuses resulting from this system might have been restrained, but neither Lake nor the Irish Government appear to have made the smallest effort to check them."—Lecky, "Ireland in the Eighteenth Century," vol. iv., pp. 268-9.

This was natural enough. As the Irish Government had ordered the application of this infernal method of torture as a

"well-timed measure" calculated to make the insurrection explode prematurely, they were not such idiots as to interfere to curb the abuses which were the essential element that made it effective. Mr. Lecky grudgingly admits that the Irish women were outraged wholesale. He says:—

> In two respects the conduct of the troops compared very unfavourably with that of the rebels. Though the latter had committed great numbers of atrocious murders, it is acknowledged on all sides that they abstained to a most remarkable degree from outrages on women, while on the other side this usual incident of military licence was terribly frequent.—*Ib.*, p. 471.

Mr. Lecky admits that the story "reads like a page from the history of the Thirty Years' War, of a Turkish war," &c. In no respect was this more conspicuous than in the violation of women.

It is a curious illustration of the extreme delicacy and reserve shown by the Irish in all matters relating to the honour of their women that this crowning infamy of all has been practically ignored. Nothing else in the whole gamut of Irish horrors is so eminently calculated to harrow the English heart and rouse the English conscience. But while the Irish historians dwell much on pitch-caps, and floggings, and murders, they veil with decent, but merciless, silence the worst of all atrocities from which they suffered, and from the stain of which they were admittedly free.

That certainly seems to be carrying prudery to an extreme. The *Nation*, of Dublin, while speaking in the warmest terms of the service which I have rendered to Ireland by setting forth the plain truth about 1798 before the British public, shrinks even now from printing any statement as to what actually happened:—

> Mr. Stead describes with perfect accuracy the abominable nature of the methods which were adopted in 1798 to goad the people to premature revolt. We regret that we cannot, without offence to our readers, produce the plain words in which he truthfully states the inevitable results of at least one of the courses pursued. It must suffice to say that the invasion of the homes of the people—under the system of free-quarters—by a brutal and licentious soldiery was the means of bringing about the commission of crimes of which our nation or our race has never been tolerant.

Of course, if the victims prefer to hide their wrongs behind such euphuistic phrases as this they will suffer the consequences, and one of these is that the criminals and their descendants will flatly refuse to believe the crimes were ever committed. But as

the Act of Union was begotten by the rape of the peasant women of Ireland, I think it necessary to say so plainly, if only to damn its authors to eternal infamy.

One word more. Mr. Lecky, although he does not emphasize the "universal rape" vouched for by Lord Cornwallis, does bear

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plain testimony to the manner of men they were who were authorized to be boarded and lodged at free quarters in the cabins of the Irish peasantry. He says:—

When a half-disciplined yeomanry and militia, demoralized by a long course of licence and irritated by many outrages, came to live at free quarters upon a hostile peasantry . . . . it was not difficult to anticipate the result. . . . . District after district was now proclaimed, and after the stated interval the soldiers descended like a flight of locusts upon them. They were quartered in the best of the houses of the suspected persons, in proportion to the means of their owners, they lived as in an enemy's country. All the neighbouring houses were searched, and any house in which any weapon was found was immediately burnt. Many others were burnt. . . . . In one small corner of Wicklow, in a single morning, no less than fourteen

houses were burnt by a single man. Horrible abuses and horrible sufferings inevitably accompanied these things. Many who resisted, and not a few it is said who did not resist, were shot dead on their thresholds. . . . . Torture was at the same time systematically employed to discover arms. Great multitudes were flogged till they almost fainted, picketed and half strangled to extort confessions. The torture of the croppies (men with hair cut short like Republicans) soon became a popular amusement among the soldiers. Some soldiers of the North Cork Militia are said to have invented

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the pitched cap of linen or thick brown paper, which was fastened with burning pitch to the victim's head, and could not be torn off without tearing out the hair or lacerating the skin. One soldier obtained a special reputation by varying the torture. He was accustomed to cut the hair of the victims still shorter, to rub into it moistened gunpowder and then to set it on fire. Sometimes also an ear or a portion of an ear was cut off. All this went on in the proclaimed districts without interference and without restraint. . . . . Outrages on women were very common.—*Ib.*, pp. 271-73.

Naturally, "very common"; under the circumstances they must have been almost universal. And all this, note, was before

a single shot had been fired. All this indeed was part and parcel of the system of "well-timed measures" deliberately adopted for prematurely exploding the insurrection, which, after the whole fiendish reality was made known, were solemnly and officially approved by the Secret Committee to whom the Government stated their own case. These were "the vigorous and summary expedients resorted to by the Government," to which, said the Committee, "is exclusively to be attributed that premature and desperate effort, the rashness of which has so evidently facilitated its suppression."—Lecky, vol. iv., p. 289.

"It was," says Mr. Lecky, "a desperate policy, and it had desperate results"—results the end of which is not yet.

"The most damnable indictment one could bring against any Government," says my correspondents. Yea, verily! But it is not of my bringing. The Government itself took credit for doing those very things which even Unionists to-day feel are too unutterably awful to be believed of mortal men. No wonder the Unionists wish to bury the record in oblivion. For the telling of this story, as I have told it, will do more than any other thing that has been done of late to revive the Home Rule cause in Britain. For with this record written, as it were, in letters of hellfire glowing lurid before our eyes, how dare we refuse to do justice to the people who suffered such things at our hands?

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